



A HISTORY OF INDIA

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES
TO THE PRESENT DAY

MICHAEL EDWARDES

IN this important new survey of five thousand years of India's history, by an historian whose stature as an interpreter of Asia is growing rapidly, political events are placed within their social context, and their consequences in the lives of ordinary people are seen, not only from the detached viewpoint of today, but through the eyes of those who observed them. Quotations from contemporary accounts supply the vivid immediacy of the eye-witness. The objectivity of the historian explains their relevance and assesses their significance in the panorama of India's past.

As the nations of the world huddle in fear of nuclear war, understanding between peoples of different cultures becomes more and more necessary. A knowledge of a country's history—and particularly that of an Asian nation which only a few years ago was a dependency of one of the great colonial powers—is essential to that understanding.

The general reader, and the student, will find this book a revealing introduction to the history and traditions of one of the most important peoples in the world today.

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From the Earliest Times to the Present Day

MICHAEL EDWARDES

*with 127 photogravure illustrations
and 21 maps*



ASIA PUBLISHING HOUSE
BOMBAY · CALCUTTA · NEW DELHI · MADRAS



For
VIJAYA LAKSHMI PANDIT
with respect and affection

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CONTENTS

LIST OF MAPS	page 9
PREFACE	II
INTRODUCTION: THE CONTINUITY OF INDIA	13
A NOTE ON METHOD AND DATING	14
PART ONE: THE FOUNDATIONS	17
1 The Face of India	19
2 Civilization in the Indus Valley	21
3 The Scaffolding of Hindu India	
i The Aryan Invasion	24
ii Social Organization	25
iii The Beginnings of Caste	27
iv The Religion of the Aryans	28
v The World of the Epics	29
4 The Revolt against Brahminism	32
5 The Alexandrian Invasion	37
<i>Alexander and the Brahmins</i>	39
<i>Early Voyages to and from India</i>	40
6 The Rise of Magadha	42
7 The Empire of Asoka	46
8 The World of the Mauryas	50
<i>The India of Megasthenes</i>	54
9 The Heirs of the Mauryas	
i The Sunga Dynasty, Kalinga and Andhra	62
ii The Greeks in the Punjab	63
iii The Saka Invasion	64
iv The Rise of the Kushans	66
v The Art of the Kushans	67
10 Western India and the South	69
<i>The Trade of Ceylon (Taprobane) and the Malabar Coast</i>	71
11 The Guptas and Harsha	74
12 Life in the Gupta and Kanauj Empires	77
<i>The Assembly at Kanauj</i>	84
13 India on the Eve of the Muslim Invasions	
i The Deccan	89
ii Southern India	93
iii Northern India	94
iv Religious, Social, and Economic Life	95
<i>Principal Dates</i>	98

PART TWO: THE ISLAMIC CONQUESTS	99
1 The Coming of the Turks	101
2 The Kingdom of Delhi	106
3 The Conquest of the South	115
i The Bahmani Kingdom	118
ii The Empire of Vijayanagar	122
<i>A Muslim Visitor to Vijayanagar</i>	125
4 The Lodi Interlude	128
5 The Interaction of Islam and Hinduism	131
6 Babur and the Foundation of the Mughal Empire	135
<i>A Victory for Babur</i>	139
<i>Principal Dates</i>	
 PART THREE: THE EUROPEAN INFILTRATION	 141
1 The Portuguese in India	143
<i>Vasco da Gama at Calicut</i>	146
2 The Empire of Akbar	
i Political Events	152
<i>Akbar Secures the Throne</i>	153
ii The Character of Akbar	157
<i>Akbar—a European Portrait</i>	159
3 The Mughal Empire at its Zenith	
i Jahangir	163
<i>The Punishment of Prince Khusrū</i>	166
ii Shah Jahan	168
<i>An Emperor's Day</i>	169
4 The Collapse of the Mughal Power: Aurangzeb and the Marathas	172
<i>An Englishman at the Court of Sivaji</i>	177
5 The Break-up of the Mughal Empire	181
6 The Nature of Mughal Rule	
i The Beginnings of Political Empire	184
ii The Administration	185
7 Life under the Mughals	
i Social Conditions	187
ii Economic Conditions	188
iii Art and Culture	189
iv Religion: The Rise of the Sikhs	190
<i>The Thrones of Aurangzeb</i>	191
8 The Quest for Eastern Trade	195
<i>Principal Dates</i>	200

Contents

7

PART FOUR: THE STRUGGLE FOR EMPIRE

203

- 1 The Foundations of British Power
 - i English and French Conflict in the Carnatic 205
 - ii The English in Bengal 207
- 2 The Growth of Direct Rule
 - i The Dual System 210
 - ii The Renewal of Conflict in the South 212
 - iii The Company Stands Forth as Diwan 213
- 3 The Company and the Crown
 - i The Governor-General in Council 216
 - ii The First War with the Marathas 217
 - iii The War against Mysore 218
 - iv The Results of Hastings's Administration 220
 - v The Consolidation of Direct Rule 221
- 4 Economic, Religious, and Social Life in the Eighteenth Century
 - i Trade and Industry 224
 - ii The Hindu-Muslim Synthesis 226
 - iii Racial Relations 227
- Principal Dates* 229

PART FIVE: THE EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION OF BRITISH DOMINION

231

- 1 Political Events from 1798 to the Establishment of Rule by the Crown
 - i From Wellesley to Amherst 1798-1828 233
 - ii Lord William Bentinck 1828-35 239
 - iii The Afghan, Sikh, and Burmese Wars 1836-56 240
 - iv The Sepoy Revolt and Queen Victoria's Proclamation 1857-8 247
 - The Course of the Mutiny 1857-9* 250
- 2 Social Reform and the Beginnings of English Education
 - Opinions of Munro and Malcolm on the Functions of British Rule* 257
 - Extracts from Macaulay's Minute on Education 1835* 260
- 3 Indian Reaction to British Expansion
 - i The New India: Ram Mohun Roy 266
 - ii Traditional India: The Growth of Fear 267
 - iii The Mutiny as the Meeting of Two Dying Systems 269
 - British Temper towards India during and after the Mutiny* 269
- 4 Indian India: The Penetration of Company Rule
 - i The Land and the Peasant 273
 - ii Merchants and Craftsmen 277
 - iii The Hand of Government 279
 - iv The Administration of Justice 282
 - v The Company and the States until 1848 284

vi	Dalhousie and the Policy of Annexation	285
	<i>Some Liberal and Utilitarian Opinions upon the Nature of British Rule before the Assumption of Power by the Crown</i>	290
	<i>Principal Dates</i>	294
PART SIX: THE RISE AND FALL OF THE INDIAN EMPIRE		297
i	Imperialism at its Zenith 1859-1909	
i	Relations with the Princes	299
ii	Afghanistan and the North-west Frontier	299
iii	The Annexation of Upper Burma	305
iv	The Government of India	305
v	Internal Administration	306
vi	The Twilight of the Imperial Idea	308
	<i>Some Further Opinions by Fitzjames Stephen and others upon the Nature of Imperial Rule in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century</i>	309
2	The Age of Concessions 1909-37	313
3	Industry and Agriculture	
i	The Rise of Indian Industry	317
ii	The Condition of the Peasant	318
4	The Origins of the Freedom Movement	
i	The Great Awakening	319
ii	The Organization of Nationalist Sentiment	320
5	The Struggle for Freedom 1905-42	
i	The Beginnings of the 'New Nationalism'	325
ii	The Gandhian Revolution	326
6	The End of the Empire	330
	<i>Principal Dates</i>	335
PART SEVEN: THE PATTERN OF FREEDOM		337
i	The Divide of History	339
2	Building the New India	
i	The Integration of the Princely States	340
ii	The Hand and the Symbol	342
iii	The Possibilities of the Future	344
3	The Transformation of Traditional India	346
THE PRINCIPAL DYNASTIES AND RULERS OF INDIA		348
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY		357
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS		363
ASPECTS OF INDIAN LIFE AND HISTORY (illustrations)		369
INDEX		433

LIST OF MAPS

PART ONE

India: Physical Features	<i>page</i> 18
India in the 6th century B.C.	35
The Empire of Asoka c. 250 B.C.	49
India in the 2nd century A.D.	65
Communications between Ancient India and the West	73
The Gupta Empire c. A.D. 400	79
India c. A.D. 900	91

PART TWO

India at the death of Mahmud of Ghazni 1030	100
The Chola Empire at the beginning of the 12th century	103
The Empire of the Tughluks in 1335	109
India at the time of the invasion of Timur 1398	117
India in 1525	127

PART THREE

The Mughal Empire in 1605	165
Southern India at the death of Sivaji 1680	175
India at the death of Aurangzeb 1707	183

PART FOUR

India in 1772	219
---------------	-----

PART FIVE

India in 1805	235
India in 1835	243
India on the eve of the Sepoy Revolt 1856	287

PART SIX

India in 1945	333
---------------	-----

PART SEVEN

The Indian Union 1960	343
-----------------------	-----

PREFACE

MOST OF THE HISTORIES OF INDIA that have been published in the West resemble the catalogues of antiquarian booksellers—collections of names and titles to which are fixed a judgment of value. There is no point in stretching the metaphor too far, but Indian history has been petrified by this concentration on great names, into a series of dynasties and kings, battles and biographies. So much so that the people of India have been eliminated from the picture altogether. Naturally, it is very convenient to be able to pigeon-hole and classify 'periods' in any nation's history—the 'Age of Washington' or the 'Churchill Era'—but in reality no such categories exist, and they only tend to reduce history to slick political catchwords, the comic-strip view of the world.

At the same time, until 1947 and even afterwards, much of the explanation of Indian history has been in the hands of Imperialist writers consciously engaged upon enlarging the mystique of the Empire. In these works, the 'British Period' covers so much of the canvas that, from them, one might have thought it had lasted for two thousand, rather than two hundred, years and that the history of India in those times was solely a panorama of the British in India. Anti-Imperialist historians, on the other hand, have pre-occupied themselves in looking back at fictitious Golden Ages, the times of the Guptas, or of the Mughals. Theirs has been the propaganda of revolt rather than the history of India. To pretend that the British are not part of the history of India, as some modern Indian historians do, is arrant nonsense. The effects of British rule are implicit in the nature of independent India.

In this survey, I have attempted to give a view of the life of the *people* of India—as well as their conquerors—within the framework of political events. Man is the measure of history as well as its victim. The effect of battles and personalities, of invasion and legislation, is not only seen in further battles and changes in the faces of the governors, but in the fluctuations and upheavals in the life of the masses.

No attempt has been made to supply here a comprehensive history of India—it would have been foolish even to consider such an exercise within the covers of one volume. The method I have used has been to give a view, an impression, of the *continuity* of India.

In the preparation of this book and in the formation of the ideas it represents, there are many to whom I owe a debt of gratitude. None more so than

Preface

to K. M. Panikkar, the distinguished Indian historian and diplomat, for the stimulus of his own work on the history of his country and for the many discussions we have had. I should also like to thank Guy Wint, whose book *The British in Asia* first impelled me into a study of Indian history, and whose interest in the present work has helped me in a complex and difficult task. In the choice and preparation of the picture-section, I am deeply indebted to Anthony Christie of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, though in no way can he be held responsible for the thesis that underlies their selection nor the conclusions they are used to support. In the extensive research that was necessary in finding the illustrations, many of which have never been reproduced before, I must put on record my appreciation of the time and knowledge so generously given by Mrs Mildred Archer, whose work in arranging and cataloguing the paintings and drawings in the India Office Library, London, is no small contribution to Indian historical studies.

INTRODUCTION

The Continuity of India

THE HISTORY OF INDIA is fundamentally the history of the Hindu people, and it is their religion and the social institution of caste which supply a continuity that is found nowhere else. The activity of political events takes place in almost a separate world. The complexities, the exclusiveness, of Hindu society resisted conquest and battle, in fact were reinforced by them. Its stability was remarkable, for it drew its strength from a religious sanction.

This system brought no sense of unity, only exclusiveness. While Hinduism was a common faith and gave to India a *cultural* identity, caste was fissiparous, dividing the Hindus into a multitude of special-interest groups jealous of their functions and fearful of those outside their community.

The great Indian kings were concerned in their government to maintain order and ensure the wealth of the rulers. The traditional customs of society were maintained and even used, as in Maurya and Gupta times, as instruments of a new economy.

When the Muslim invaders settled in India and converted some of the people to Islam, though there was a basis of common habits and customs, the newly converted Muslims, reacting against the exclusivity of caste, organized themselves into separate, and later antagonistic, communities.

Even the British, after a period of tolerance and fraternization, finding themselves prevented from social intercourse with Hindus and being unwilling after the revolt of 1857 to associate with the Muslims—whom they believed to have been making a bid to regain power—themselves withdrew into a community of special interests and power.

The British, unlike previous conquerors, carried out reforms of certain superficial though important aspects of Hinduism but did not, perhaps wisely, attempt any serious interference with the caste structure.

The very disunity of a caste-ridden people ensured the continuance of the Hindu social structure and because that structure received its ultimate sanction in the Hindu religion, that religion, and the civilization which was dependent upon it for its philosophical background and for the sources of its literature and art, has survived for nearly three thousand years. Indian civilization during that period, after brilliant beginnings slowly deteriorated, though at certain points it appeared revived and refreshed. But its very

deterioration supplied the background for revival. The decadence of Hindu life from the ninth to the eleventh centuries permitted the success of the Turkish invasion. A great revival in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries led to the Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar. There are many other instances that might be quoted. In the nineteenth century, yet another revival led to the growth of nationalism and in the twentieth, to that revolutionary saint, Mahatma Gandhi.

The political events that are surveyed in the following pages might be said to take place in the street. Occasionally they burst into a house. Some of the furniture or a piece of a pediment is looted or destroyed. But the family, the Hindu family, continues to live there, regretting perhaps the loss of a cherished object or a son who has decided to leave home, but otherwise untouched by the violence outside—which was really a fight between rival gangs, and not an attack upon their house or the life that was lived within its walls.

A NOTE ON METHOD AND DATING

Up until the British period I have quoted extensively from contemporary sources both in the text and in the appendices. Most of this material is from non-Hindu sources. This is due to the general indifference of the Brahmins, the principal literary class, to historical writing as a form of literature. Quasi-historical works *do* exist but are usually half-romance and half-history in which it is difficult to decide which statement refers to the real and which to the imaginative. Most of the contemporary material until the coming of the European is taken from Greek, Latin, Chinese, and Muslim writers.

The appendices in which such sources are used at some length are printed here without critical comment for they are intended to give, not historical truth, though they do so, but a view of opinion at the time of their writing. Those quotations from Greek and Latin writers for example, reveal the reactions of the Mediterranean world to India and are to some extent prejudiced by the preconceptions of Roman and Hellenic philosophical, political, and scientific ideas.

For the Muslim period there is ample material which can be, where necessary, corrected from other sources but without it it would be impossible to write the history of Muslim India. In the European period, and in particular the times of the foundation and consolidation of British rule, Indian administration was always the bone at which English political philosophers were quick to make a grab. Their writings, which were more effective than

such theorists can usually hope to be, are fundamental to an understanding of the real nature of British rule.

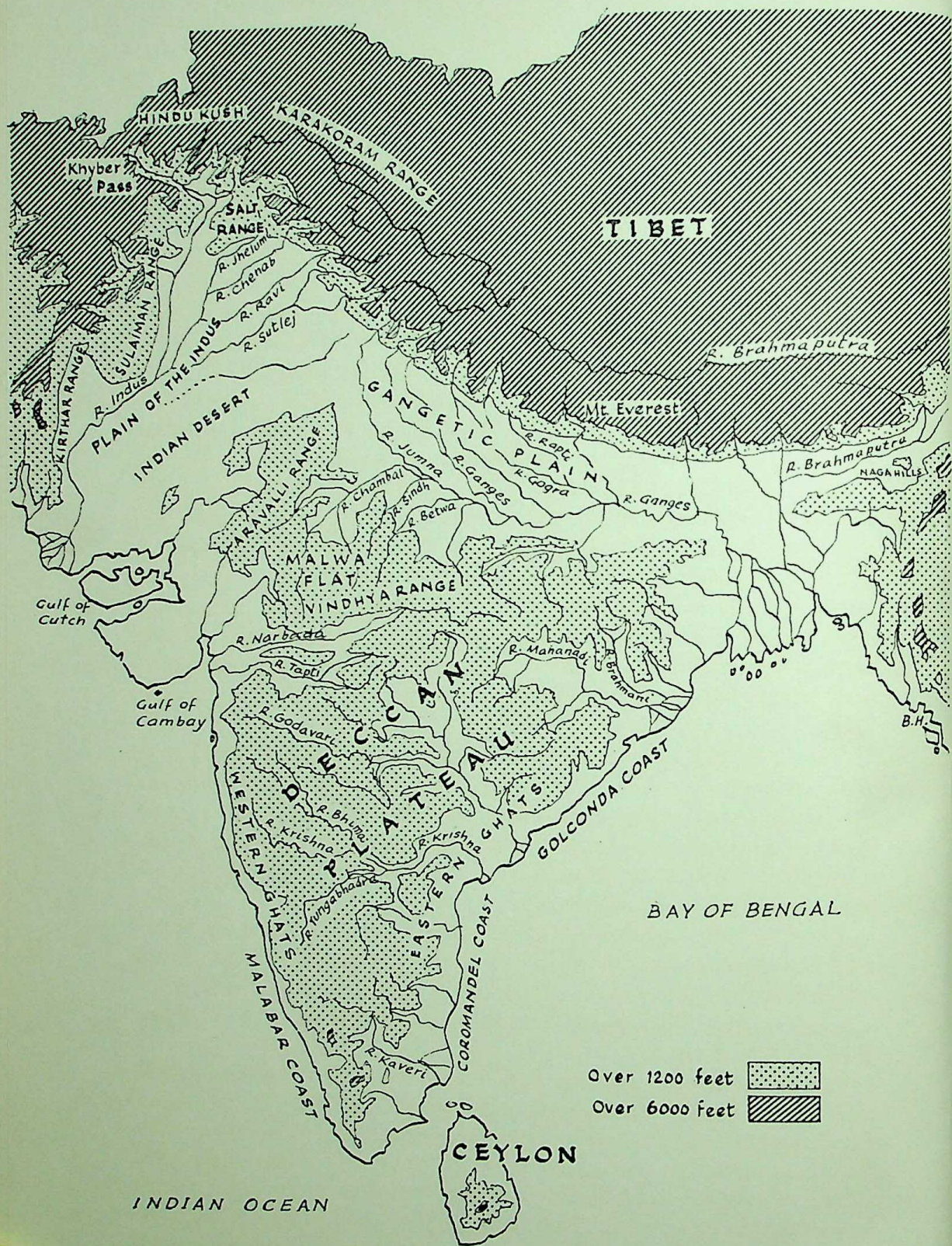
One aspect of Indian history is missing from this work and some explanation of why this is so is necessary. This is what is sometimes referred to as 'Greater India'—the radiation of Indian civilization amongst the countries of South-east Asia. Fundamentally, this is not a part of the pattern of the present book which is, apart from Burma in the British period, strictly concerned with the sub-continent of India and its history. Furthermore the subject is vexed by propaganda and controversy and cannot be dealt with briefly. Archaeological research is in process of completely re-writing the story of Indian relations with South-east Asia and any general treatment of the subject would be highly misleading. The next few years should reveal a revolutionary concept of this relationship and it is possible that in a subsequent edition of this work a chapter might be included to display this new view and the evidence for it.

The picture-section has been planned as an extension of the text. A picture, and a short caption, is often capable of explaining a complex idea more successfully than hundreds of words of text. The section is divided into themes: The Gods; Houses; People; Agriculture and Industry, and the faces of Power. The latter is a gallery of the most significant individuals in the history of India. As most of the illustrations are taken from sculpture, architecture, painting, and other art-objects, a view of the glories and decadence of Indian and Indo-Muslim art emerges, and, as is proper, within the close confines of their social context.

There is no doubt that in the next ten years or even less, archaeological discovery of new inscriptions and other evidence will make it necessary to sharply revise the present dating of Indian history certainly up to the end of the Guptas. Such dates as are given here are those in general acceptance at the time of writing except in such cases where I have myself decided on a revision.

Part One

THE FOUNDATIONS



INDIA: PHYSICAL FEATURES

I

The Face of India

THE CONTINUITY of Indian civilization and social structure from the very earliest times until the present day has one of its sources in the geographical configuration of the country. The immense barrier of the Himalayas, which stretch for some sixteen hundred miles from Afghanistan to Assam, has prevented intercourse with the rest of Asia except through the passes of the North-west. Until the Japanese war of 1941-45, the activity of Indian history was centred around the passes that are part of the mythology of novelists and script-writers—the Khyber, 3,400 feet above sea-level, with the city of Peshawar at its foot; and, to the south, the Bolan. Through the Khyber runs the road to Kabul, which is the focus of routes running northwards to Balkh and Central Asia, and westwards to Herat, Meshed, and Asia Minor. Through the Bolan is Kandahar, a meeting-place of routes from Seistan and Persia. By these approaches, merchants, migrating tribes, and conquering armies have poured into the fertile plains of northern India.

The other important topographical factor in the history of India is the pattern of its river systems. Water in Asia is a vital determinant of historical change, as a means of communication as well as a source of water supply. The earliest inhabitants of India settled along the banks of the great streams. Control of water is an instrument of administration—in many cases, its possession is a guarantee of strength.

There are four river systems, and because of them India may be broken into four main cultural divisions. To the west, there is the alluvial plain watered by the Indus and its tributaries, the Sutlej, the Beas, the Ravi, the Chenab, and the Jhelum—the Panchanad, or 'Five Rivers', from which the Punjab takes its name.

The great Gangetic plain, an area of some 300,000 square miles watered by the Ganges and its great tributaries—the Jumna, the Chambal, the Gumti, the Gogra, and the Son—saw Aryan civilization reach its highest development, and it later became the seat of the Hindu and Muslim Empires. The English in Bengal owed their power and expansion to the fact that they slowly seized control of it. The basins of the Indus and the Ganges are separated by the desert of the Rajputana, and joined by a narrow strip which

runs between it and the Himalayas and follows, roughly, the course of the river Jumna. In this corridor, the ancient Kurukshetra, the fate of the country has many times been decided.

'Mother Ganges' is the sacred river of India. Hardwar, where the river rises from the Himalayas and flows into the plains, and Prayag (Allahabad), where it joins the Jumna (*Yamuna*, or 'twin'), are sites for the pilgrimage of millions of Hindus. Upon the lower banks of the Ganges stands the holy city of Kasi, or Banaras (Benares). Near its mouth, the river joins the Brahmaputra (the 'Son of Brahma'), which flows through immense gorges from Tibet, through Assam and eastern Bengal. This area, known originally as Aryavarta, has always been the centre of Indian life and its expansion to cover the whole of the sub-continent is the core of Indian history.

Another mountain range, the Vindhya, divides Aryavarta from southern India. These mountains and their offshoots are sandstone ranges rising to about three thousand feet, and were at one time covered with jungles through which the Aryan peoples found it difficult to penetrate. These ranges are the northern edge of the Deccan plateau.

To the west are the Western Ghats, or 'stairs', a mountain wall running parallel to the shores of the Arabian Sea for about six hundred miles. The Ghats, with their numerous flat-topped peaks—easily turned into fortresses—later played a decisive role in the history of the Marathas. To the south, the Ghats are pierced by the twenty-mile broad Palghat, or Gap of Coimbatore, which joins the Malabar coast to the plains of the Carnatic. On the eastern side, the Ghats are not continuous, nor so steep, and the two ranges end in the Nilgiri, or 'Blue Mountains'.

The rivers of Peninsular India, except for the Tapti and the Narbada, flow into the Bay of Bengal. The most important are the Mahanadi, the Godavari, and the Krishna. The main tributary of the latter, the Tungabhadra, is the southern boundary of the Deccan. Beyond is Tamil country, watered by the Pennar and the Kaveri. The south has evolved a culture distinctively its own, and the barrier of the Vindhya might well have divided two civilizations. That it did not is due to the Hindu saint, Agastya, and his missionary successes.

Peninsular India had from the earliest times maritime contacts with both East and West, the significance and pattern of which must be left for another place.

Essentially, the geographical factors—the two mountain ranges of the Himalayas and the Vindhya, the four river systems, the basins of the Indus and the Ganges, the Deccan plateau, and Peninsular India—are the girders of Indian history. It is now time to examine the buildings that have been constructed around this frame.

Civilization in the Indus Valley

THE DISCOVERY OF TWO CITIES, Mohenjo-daro in the Larkana district of Sind and Harappa in the Montgomery district of the Punjab, and excavations at other sites have revealed that some five thousand years ago a high-level civilization flourished in these parts of northern India. The area of agreement amongst archaeologists on the *nature* of this civilization and on some precise dating is, however, small and in the next decade many changes of opinion will take place. Such conclusions as have been made and as are now generally accepted are almost entirely based upon objects unearthed at the two main sites.

No written records exist and though a number of seals have been found with letters engraved on them, they have not yet been deciphered. A great many theories have been put forward concerning the political and social organization of the Indus Valley people but all *remain* theories and therefore have no place in the present work. A brief résumé, however, of the facts that can safely be deduced from the finds is necessary. Mohenjo-daro and Harappa though some four hundred miles apart are remarkably similar in ground-plan and architecture and it will be convenient to take the former as an example of both.

THE CITY The area of the city is quite large. Dwelling-houses range from palaces with frontages of over eighty-five feet to small buildings of two rooms. They are made of brick and the larger buildings have two or more storeys with paved floors, narrow stairways, and courtyards. Some larger structures with pillared halls are assumed to have been temples or administrative offices of some sort.

In the centre of the city is a Great Bath, 180 feet long by 108 feet wide with walls eight feet thick. The wide streets of the city have elaborate drainage systems. All this is indicative of a large and flourishing population living in considerable luxury and comfort.

THE PEOPLE The essential features of the social, economic, and religious life of the inhabitants can be built up from the remains.

Dress: Cotton fabrics were in common use with wool for warm clothing. Both men and women of all classes wore ornaments—girdles, nose-studs,

ear-rings, and anklets by the women and necklaces, armlets, finger-rings, and bangles by both sexes. There is great variety in the design of these objects and the materials used include gold, silver, ivory, copper, jade, agate, carnelian, and lapis lazuli.

Food: The principal diet was wheat. Also pork, mutton, fish, and eggs.

Everyday Articles: Earthenware vessels made on the wheel, plain and painted. Copper, bronze, and silver vessels were known but apparently little used. No iron has been found. Spindles of baked earth, porcelain, and shell have been found. Needles and combs of ivory and axes, chisels, knives, and razors of copper and bronze. Children's toys include small wheeled carts and chairs, implying that these articles were in use in ordinary life. Dice-pieces indicate a love of gaming.

Domestic Animals: Skeletons prove that buffalo, elephant, sheep, the humped-bull, and the camel were domesticated. Children's toys include dogs. There is some doubt about the horse.

Seals and Sculpture: Hundreds of terracotta seals have been discovered. Some have representations of real and mythical animals. Most of the seals bear inscriptions in a pictographic script which has not yet been deciphered and would, in any case, probably supply little information if it was, as there are no long inscriptions of any sort and no bi-lingual seals. It has been suggested that the Indus peoples used palm-leaves for their records and, naturally, these would not survive the fall of the cities. These and such sculpture as has been found display a fine finish and a high degree of artistic development.

Trade: It seems probable that the seals were used in trade and there is evidence that wide commercial transactions with other parts of India were commonplace. Tin, copper, and precious metals must have been obtained by trade with countries outside of India.

Agriculture and Industry: Large-scale cultivation must have played an important part in the life of the common people—wheat, barley, and cotton were grown. Crafts included those of the potter, weaver, mason, and blacksmith and of the jeweller, ivory-worker, and stone-cutter. Technically the Indus people were well advanced, having the potter's wheel, kiln-burnt bricks, and the knowledge of casting and alloy of metals.

Weapons: No swords have been found and very few bows and arrows but many axes, daggers, spears, maces, and slings. No shields or body-armour have been discovered. The weapons were usually of copper or bronze but occasionally of stone.

Religion: Figurines of a mother goddess have been found as well as of a male god which may well have been a proto-Siva. This latter belief is supported by the discovery of phallus-like objects—the *lingam* in which Siva was later to be worshipped. There was also a primitive animism—the belief in the

existence of spirits of good and evil in inanimate objects such as stone and tree.

DECLINE AND FALL It seems probable that the Indus civilization went through a long period of decadence. Groups of skeletons found in unnatural and distorted positions indicate a violent end. This is vaguely supported by evidence in the *Rig-Veda* and it seems likely that the Indus cities were destroyed, about 1500 B.C., by non-urban barbarians who had no use for a city civilization. If, however, the supposed religious relics of the Indus people are correctly interpreted, it seems that certain elements, and in particular the phallic worship of Siva, passed through the Aryans into Brahminism.

The Scaffolding of Hindu India

I

THE ARYAN INVASION

THE SOLE SOURCE of information on the Indo-Aryans (*arya*—meaning 'noble, well-born, free') is the Vedic hymns or *Vedas*, the oldest literary remains in the Indo-European language group (Sanskrit, Greek, the Teutonic, Slav, and Romance types). The word *Veda* means knowledge and to Hindus the *Vedas* are—as is the Bible to Christians and the Koran to Muslims—the primary source of religious belief. These hymns are invocations to various deities and were passed orally from generation to generation of *Rishis*, or 'seers'. There are three principal *Vedas*, the *Rig*, the *Sama*, and the *Yajura*. A fourth, the *Atharva-Veda*, is a compilation of magical spells. The *Sama-Veda* and the *Yajura-Veda* are mainly ceremonial recapitulations of the *Rig-Veda* which consists of 1,028 hymns of varying ages, divided into ten books.

The original homeland of the Aryan peoples is not known for certain, but it is probable that they came from Iran to India and were to some extent the heirs of the civilization of Sumer. There is no characteristic Aryan 'culture' nor does it seem that they were a 'race' in any genetic sense, though they had sufficient group-identity to permit Darius I of Persia to have inscribed on his gravestone (486 B.C.) the claim that he was '*Parsa, Parsahya puthra, Arya, Arya cithra*'—'A Persian, son of a Persian, an Aryan of Aryan descent.'

The Aryans were pastoral tribesmen and warriors, tall and fair with straight noses. Their first move into India, about the beginning of the second millennium B.C., was as settlers, with their wives and children and their herds of animals. This peaceful immigration was followed by others which resulted in expansion, and conflict with the people living in fortified areas which now appear possibly to have been outposts of the Indus Valley civilization. These peoples were crushed and destroyed, probably because of that characteristic historical movement in which decadent high-level civilizations fall so easily to the vigour of the barbarians.

That the Aryans of the first invasion remained a nomadic people, an administration in the tent rather than the city, can be assumed from the

Rig-Veda. The high god of the *Vedas*, Indra, is known as the 'breaker of cities' (*parumdara*), but no mention is made of a builder or possessor of cities. The Sanskrit word for brick (*ista*) does not occur in the *Rig-Veda*, only in the later ones. The Aryan people lived in camps. The peoples whom they conquered are described in the *Vedas* as short, black, and noseless, as *dasyu* or 'slaves', and the Vedic hymns constantly refer to wars against them. But later the Aryan conquerors intermarried with the female slaves they captured and, in time, produced a mixed race adopting many of the customs of their mothers.

A second invasion appears to have taken place not later than 1000 B.C., and the Aryans moved outwards from the Punjab towards the east. They had become much more sophisticated, inheriting, from the Indus civilization, the plough and the techniques of pottery, weaving, and carpentry.

The Aryans were continually fighting among themselves, and the Vedic hymns record great battles fought by infantry armed with bows and arrows, spears, swords, and battle-axes, and nobles dressed in armour, fighting from chariots—all to the sound of music and drums. It would seem from the *Rig-Veda* that many of the battles were fought for the control of water, an essential factor in nomadic agriculture. This continual inter-tribal strife and the pressures of the second invasion compelled the Aryans to move eastwards.

II

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The *Rig-Veda* gives us a clear picture of the social life of these Indo-Aryans. The unit was the family, sharing its wealth and its responsibilities. The head was the father (*dama-pati*) whose control was absolute. At his death the property was divided. Women played an important role in society—the wife ruled the female members of the household and the slaves. There was no child marriage and polygamy seems to have been unknown. The wife's duties were to grind the corn, cook her husband's food and serve him, clean the pots and pans, and spread cow-dung on the floor. Above all, she was to provide him with a son. Later, when about eight years old, this son would be given the sacred cord of *manja* grass, tied over the left shoulder and under the right arm, while the priest whispered the Gayatri *mantra*.

'Let us meditate on the excellent glory of the Sun;
the God may he enlighten our understanding.'

The village (*grama*) consisted of a group of families, with a headman and hereditary officers. Oxen were used for ploughing and drawing carts and a

man's wealth was assessed by the number of his cows. Horses were kept for drawing chariots and dogs were used in hunting. They grew barley but not wheat or rice. Their diet generally consisted of parched barley, unleavened cakes, vegetables, clarified butter (*ghi*), and milk, but meat, including the flesh of the cow, was eaten at festivals and weddings. A sort of beer made from barley was drunk and, at religious ceremonies, an intoxicating drink made from the juice of a plant called *soma*. A whole book of Vedic hymns in praise of *soma*, which was supposed to confer immortality, survives.

Houses were made of wood with thatched roofs and mud walls. Clothing was usually of wool or skins, a skirt and a shawl for the shoulders. Hair was elaborately dressed and ear-rings and necklaces were worn.

The Indo-Aryans practised the arts, and that of the potter, the weaver, the jeweller, the carpenter, and the smith are mentioned. But though they used copper and gold, silver and iron were unknown. Their favourite amusements were chariot-racing, wrestling, dancing, and music. They were also chronic gamblers and one Vedic hymn, a sort of gambler's lament, is devoted to warnings such as:

'My wife rejects me and my mother hates me
The gamester finds no pity for his troubles.
No better use can I see for a gambler,
Than for a costly horse, worn-out and aged.'

and advice:

"Play not with dice but cultivate the cornfield.
Enjoy thy riches deeming them sufficient;
There are thy cows, there is thy wife, O Gambler!"
This counsel Savitar the noble gives me.'

The tribe consisted of a number of families or clans living in villages. The head was the *Raja*, or 'king', usually hereditary but sometimes elected with the approval of the people. He was surrounded with a retinue of nobles who wore armour and fought from chariots with bow and arrow, sword, and spear. The king was no absolute ruler. His acts needed the sanction of a popular assembly (*sabha*) consisting of the males of fighting age. The king was the personification of justice. There was no capital punishment, a murderer having to pay a fine of a certain number of cows as compensation to the family of the victim. In administering law or tribal custom the king was advised by his *purohit*, or 'family priest'. Like the Brahmin of later times, the priest also composed hymns in his master's honour and invoked the protection of the gods over his acts.

The Beginnings of Caste

27

III

THE BEGINNINGS OF CASTE

The original idea of caste (a Portuguese word meaning purity of race) is that of colour (*varna*) and it emerged when the conquering Aryans absorbed the conquered population into a new system of society. The name given to these peoples by the invaders was *dasyu* (enemy) which later came to mean a slave. But the *dasyu* was not a piece of *private* property but of the Aryan tribe as a whole, very much in the same way as cattle. These *dasyu* were dark-skinned, the Aryans were white or at least lighter in colour.

The division into castes was a sort of occupational identification: the Brahmins were priests, the Kshatriyas, warriors, and the Vaisyas the commercial classes; the latter including cultivators, traders, goldsmiths, weavers, potters, and so on. Traces of such social divisions can be found amongst Iranians and in early Greece and Rome. To these, the Indo-Aryans added that of the Sudras or 'serfs'—the descendants of the *dasyus*. This functional structure was given divine origin in the *Rig-Veda* (x. 90) which describes how, when Purusha, the archetypal man, was sacrificed, the Brahmins rose from his head, the Kshatriyas from his arms, the Vaisyas from his thighs, and the Sudras from his feet.

In Vedic times, caste was not exclusive; a warrior could become a priest, and the king, though a warrior, had certain priestly functions. Caste-rigidity was the result of the claim for a monopoly in religious rites by the Brahmins. Social imitation is a characteristic of an evolving society, and the lower orders formed similar special-interest groups based mainly on occupation. These groups ensured their continuance by a strict observance of the rule of marriage within the caste, i.e. men must marry women of their own caste and no other.

Later, religious sects such as the Jains, Sikhs, and Lingyats, while being antagonistic to caste, found themselves forced to assume caste status. In time, the four main castes divided into sub-castes, each exclusive and dedicated to a particular economic or religious function. In the last detailed census of tribes and castes (in 1901), 2,378 separate groups are listed, some with numbers running into millions, others with as few as a hundred members. The largest numbers were fourteen million Brahmins, and eleven million Chamars, who are dressers of hide and leather and the lowest caste of all.

Caste is the steel frame of Hindu society and an organization of almost incredible complexity, but the basis is the belief in the divine origin of the four castes, fixed and unchanging, the gulf between them impassable. To destroy caste would be to demolish the whole Hindu social structure.

Conquerors and invaders, Buddhist, Muslim, and Christian, have been forced to accept its all-pervading strength.

IV

THE RELIGION OF THE ARYANS

The Aryans worshipped the Devas or 'Shining Ones', who represented the powers of Nature. The most important of these gods was the sky father, Dyaus (*Ζεύς*, Jupiter), though he later gave way to Varuna, the lord of sky and sea. The Sun was worshipped in five forms, symbolizing various aspects of solar energy and effect. Other gods were Rudra, the storm, the two Asvins, the morning and evening stars, Agni the god of fire, and Ushas the goddess of dawn (*Ἥως*, Aurora) who inspired one of the most beautiful of the Vedic hymns (*Rig-Veda*, i. 113).

'Now Heaven's Daughter appeared before us
A maiden shining in resplendent garments.
Thou sovran lady of all earthly treasure,
Auspicious Dawn, shine here today upon us.

'In the sky's framework she has gleamed with brightness:
The goddess has cast off the robe of darkness
Rousing the world from sleep, with ruddy horses
Dawn in her well-yoked chariot is arriving.'

Indra, god of the rains, was one of the foremost of Aryan gods. He was conceived as an ideal warrior, armed with a thunderbolt and riding in a chariot and bringing the boon of rain to the parched earth. These are only few of the Vedic pantheon. Rivers were worshipped for their life-bringing function.

Though the Vedic gods have human attributes—they eat milk, *ghi*, and flour-cakes, and drink *soma*—they were not clearly anthropomorphized. No temples and no images play a part in the Vedic religion. Ritual, however, was precise as this was the only way of approaching the gods. The middle-man between the god and his suppliant was the Brahmin.

The Aryans cremated their dead and the ashes were scattered, as today, in a river. The wife was not burned with her husband but was called away from the pyre with the words: 'Rise up, O woman, into the world of the living.' Vedic ideas of the after-life were crude. They believed the soul departed to the 'fathers' where it was received by Yama, king of the dead. The reward or punishment was a sort of Elysium or a bottomless pit. The concept of rebirth had not yet appeared.

In later Vedic literature, particularly in the tenth *mandala* (section) of the *Rig-Veda*, we have the first expression of Indo-Aryan philosophical ideas.

'Nor Aught nor Nought existed; yon bright sky
Was not, nor heaven's broad woof outstretched above.
What covered all? What sheltered? What concealed?
Was it the water's fathomless abyss?
There was not death—yet was there nought immortal;
There was no confine betwixt day and night;
The only One breathed breathless by itself,
Other than It there nothing since has been.
Darkness there was, and all at first was veiled
In gloom profound—an ocean without light—
The germ that still lay covered in the husk
Burst forth, one nature, from the fervent heat.
Who knows the secret? Who proclaimed it here?
Whence, whence this manifold creation sprang?
The Gods themselves came later into being—
Who knows from whence this great creation sprang?
He from whom this great nation came,
Whether His will created or was mute,
The Most High Seer that is in highest heaven,
He knows it—or perchance even He knows not.'

Here the concept of the One, the ultimate behind the many manifestations, emerges. Also came the idea of *Rita*, the 'Moral Law' which is unchanging and unchangeable.

V

THE WORLD OF THE EPICS

As the social and economic order of the Indo-Aryans crystallized into a new society, the need for new pastures forced territorial expansion. At the time when the *Vedas* were composed, they had not moved farther east than present-day Ambala, but when more evidence appears in the form of the Epics, they have occupied the fertile country between the Jumna and the Ganges, known as the Madyadesa or 'Middle Land', and the Ganges replaces the Indus as the sacred river.

Our knowledge of this period of expansion is contained in two great works—the *Mahabharata*, the 'Great Epic of the War of the Descendants of Bharata', and the *Ramayana*, or 'Story of Rama'. The *Mahabharata* is the

longest poem in the world consisting as it does of 100,000 *slokas* (verses). The central theme is as follows.

When Pandu, King of Hastinapur, died his blind brother Dhritshtra returned to the throne. His sons, the Kauravas, were brought up along with those of Pandu, the Pandavas. But the excellence of the five Pandavas soon excited the hatred of Duryodhana, eldest of the Kauravas, and he had them driven off to the forests. There the brothers came to Panchala, where the King gave his daughter, Draupadi, as wife to all of them. They retrieved a part of their inheritance and settled in Indraprastha (Delhi). But Duryodhana persuaded one of the five to throw dice with him and succeeded in winning the new kingdom from him. Helped by their uncle, the Pandavas escaped into exile. When their period of exile ended, they asked for their inheritance to be restored; this having been refused, war began. The Pandavas were assisted by Sri Krishna, an incarnation of god, and emerged victorious. The Kauravas were killed and their father retired to the forests, while the Pandavas returned to Hastinapur and ended their days with varied fortunes.

The *Ramayana* is an older work which has suffered from interpolations. Its author was Valmiki, and it is harmoniously constructed and written in a language which bears witness to a high literary and aesthetic culture. The first and last of the seven books were later additions. Briefly, the story is that Rama, oldest son of the King of Ayodhya, pursued by the jealousy of his stepmother is exiled for fourteen years to the forests. His wife Sita is carried off by Ravana, king of the demons, to the island of Lanka. In his pursuit of her, Rama is assisted by the tribe of monkeys whose leaders were Sugriva and Hanuman, and when Ravana refuses to surrender Sita war ensues. Ravana and almost all his demons die, and Rama returns in triumph to Ayodhya with his rescued wife.

From the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* emerge a view of Indo-Aryan society in its post-Vedic stage. The caste system has become rigid, though there are passages which declare that there is no distinction of caste. Descriptions are given of the qualities of the four main castes. The Brahmin, for example, is one who is never angry or infatuated, speaks the truth, pleases his elders, controls his senses, is virtuous, and devoted to study.

Women have a very special place—a wife is described in the *Mahabharata* as 'half the man, his truest friend, a perpetual spring of virtue, pleasure and wealth. . . . A sweetly speaking wife is a companion in solitude, a father in advice, and a rest in passing through life's wilderness.' Three things are described that do not become impure, 'women, gems, and water'. Women could choose their own husbands and went out in public.

In Epic times, the Aryans had produced a vast number of small kingdoms along the banks of the Jumna, the Ganges, and their tributaries. The Aryans

The World of the Epics

31

seem to have spent much energy and time in battle and the forming of alliances for war. The king still led his army in battle. Towns were appearing and there are descriptions of well-watered and lighted streets, and fortifications to protect them. Copper and silver money is used for the payment of taxes as well as produce and cattle. The cow is now regarded as sacred, but meat other than beef is still eaten. Polygamy is practised. Chivalry abounded and, like the knights of mediaeval Europe, the Indo-Aryan prince is caught in a vast web of chivalric protocol.

The two great Epics, are, next to the *Vedas*, the most famous works of Sanskrit literature. The *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* are part of the popular life of the people, supplying ideal heroes and heroines. The stories have been used over and over again by dramatists, poets, and storytellers. The *Mahabharata* contains one of the most profound philosophical poems of all time when, before the battle, Krishna addresses Arjuna on the duty of a warrior. His words form the *Bhagavad Gita* or 'Song Celestial'.

A number of important changes in religion were taking place and the older Vedic gods became less prominent though mention is still made of Indra the warrior god, and Varuna. But the now familiar trinity, the Trimurti, of Brahma the Creator, Siva the Destroyer, and Vishnu the Preserver, becomes the object of worship. Ritualism becomes all-important. New divinities are introduced. The cosmos is conceived as a perpetual process of creation and destruction, filling eternity with an everlasting rhythm.

The world of the Epics is one in which human activity is shown to be inspired by ancient ideals. Great emphasis was placed upon morality. But it is also the period of the beginnings of sectarianism and religious petrification.

The Revolt against Brahminism

THE SIXTH CENTURY B.C. is the beginning of certainty in Indian history. Until then, chronology does not exist and the patterns of historical movement have to be sifted from legendary sources. But with the coming of the Buddha and Mahavira, the prophet of the Jains, it is possible—by the use of close similarities in both Buddhist and Jain tradition—to establish some measure of certainty in the order of events.

Lists of kings and their genealogies are now available and the political structure, centres of power, and so on in northern India can be defined with some precision. Pradyota ruled Avanti from its capital Ujjain. Prasenajit was king of Kosala; his visit to the Buddha is commemorated in sculpture. Magadha, the seat of a great empire at the date of the *Mahabharata*, was ruled by Bimbisara, who later became a disciple of the Buddha. This is the political structure of northern India, which is the background to the religious discontent which resulted in the reformist movements of the Buddha and Mahavira.

As we have seen, the old religion of the *Vedas*, which was pragmatic and sacrificial, had lost its appeal with the masses. Yet the ideas of the *Upanishads*, a highly scholastic, metaphysical doctrine of the direct realization of God, could not in any way supply the spiritual needs of the people.

The period of the *Upanishads* (c. 800–600 B.C.) is significant for the growth of pessimism, and the main object of religion came to be the release from life—which was evil. There also emerged the belief in *Atma*, the 'World Soul'. The *Chhandogya Upanishad* described how the *Atma* is part of the body as salt dissolved in water.

"Put this salt into water, see me tomorrow morning," said Uddalaka. Shwetaketu did as he was told.

Uddalaka said: "Bring me the salt you put into the water last night." Shwetaketu looked, but could not find it. The salt had dissolved.

Uddalaka asked his son how the top of the water tasted. Shwetaketu said: "It is salt."

Uddalaka asked how the middle of the water tasted.

Shwetaketu said: "It is salt."

Uddalaka asked how the bottom of the water tasted.

Shwetaketu said: "It is salt."

The Revolt against Brahminism

33

Uddalaka said: "Throw away the water; come to me."

Shwetaketu did as he was told and said: "The salt will always remain in the water."

Uddalaka said: "My son! Though you do not find that Being in the world, He is there."

"That Being is the seed; all else but His expression. He is Truth. He is Self. Shwetaketu! You are That."

Here too appears the concept of metempsychosis, the migration of the soul on death into another body until, after a series of wanderings, it finds release in returning to the World Soul. Conduct in a previous incarnation determines the position in the next—the good man returns as a Brahmin, Kshatriya, or Vaisya; the evil as a dog, a hog, or a Chandala (the offspring of a Brahmin woman and a Sudra, lowest of all in the social scale).

The consequences of action (*Karma*) could be overcome by penances from which probably resulted the practice of Yoga, later made into a discipline by Patanjali (c. 300 B.C.).

The Sankya school, founded by Kapila about the time of the *Upanishads*, was basically materialist. *Atma* was rejected, rebirth was due to ignorance and could be avoided. Sankya ideas had profound influence both in India and elsewhere, for example on the later Gnostic schools in Greece.

The two great reformers Vardhamana Mahavira and Gautama Buddha were born into a religious climate saturated with the Sankya system and this had considerable effect upon the doctrines they formulated.

Jainism and Buddhism have much in common. Both were revolts, not against Hinduism itself, but against the diverse polytheism and the arrogant claims of the Brahmins. *Karma* and rebirth are fundamental to both, each regarded existence as evil and offered a path to ultimate release. Mahavira and Gautama were both Kshatriyas and their systems were practical rather than philosophical. In the course of time, both religions have changed from the concepts of their founders, but in the beginning both attempted to reveal a pragmatic 'Way', attainable by all, without mediation by a priesthood which cherished the mysteries. Originally, the earlier records were composed not in classical Sanskrit but in the language of everyday speech, called Prakrit.

Vardhamana Mahavira, the man to whom Jainism owes its establishment as a faith, probably lived from 540 to 468 B.C. According to Jainist tradition, he was the last of twenty-four *Tirthankaras*, or 'prophets', and the sect seems to have existed for some time before the appearance of Mahavira—though there is little satisfactory evidence for this other than tradition. It seems probable, however, that the twenty-third *Tirthankara*, Parsva, was a historical

personage. At the age of thirty, Mahavira became an ascetic and, after twelve years of wanderings, set out to teach the truth he had learned. Followers gathered around him and he was welcomed at the court of Magadha. His first adherents were found among the mercantile classes and the pattern today remains the same. There are now some one and a half million Jains, mainly in the Rajputana and Gujarat.

Siddhartha Gautama, or Sakyamuni, who was known after his Enlightenment as the Buddha, lived approximately between 560 and 480 B.C. The son of a Sakya chief of Kshatriya caste, who ruled in Kapilavastu on the Nepalese border—about one hundred miles north of Benares, in the foothills of the Himalayas—he was traditionally said to have been born in the Lumbini gardens, a belief which has now been reinforced by the discovery of an Asokan pillar erected in 250 B.C. and inscribed 'Here was born Buddha, Sakyamuni.' Overcome by the miseries and sorrows of everyday life, he tried many of the disciplines and doctrines current at the time, but finally received what he believed to be the truths of life and death.

The essence of the teaching of the Buddha was a call to take the Middle Way. This 'Way' was based on the recognition of the four truths: the Truth of Pain—birth, sickness, etc.; the Truth of the Origin of Pain—desire; the Truth of the End of Pain—by eliminating desire; and the Truth of the way to its elimination—the Noble Eightfold Path.

The appeal of the Buddha's message was immense, for it offered a new revelation, almost a classless religion—though strictly speaking Buddhism was not a new *religion* at all but the restatement of social truths in a new and dynamic form. It was also an *accessible* revelation couched in the common speech, undisguised by an elaborate ritual and a secret language. All castes and none were its converts.

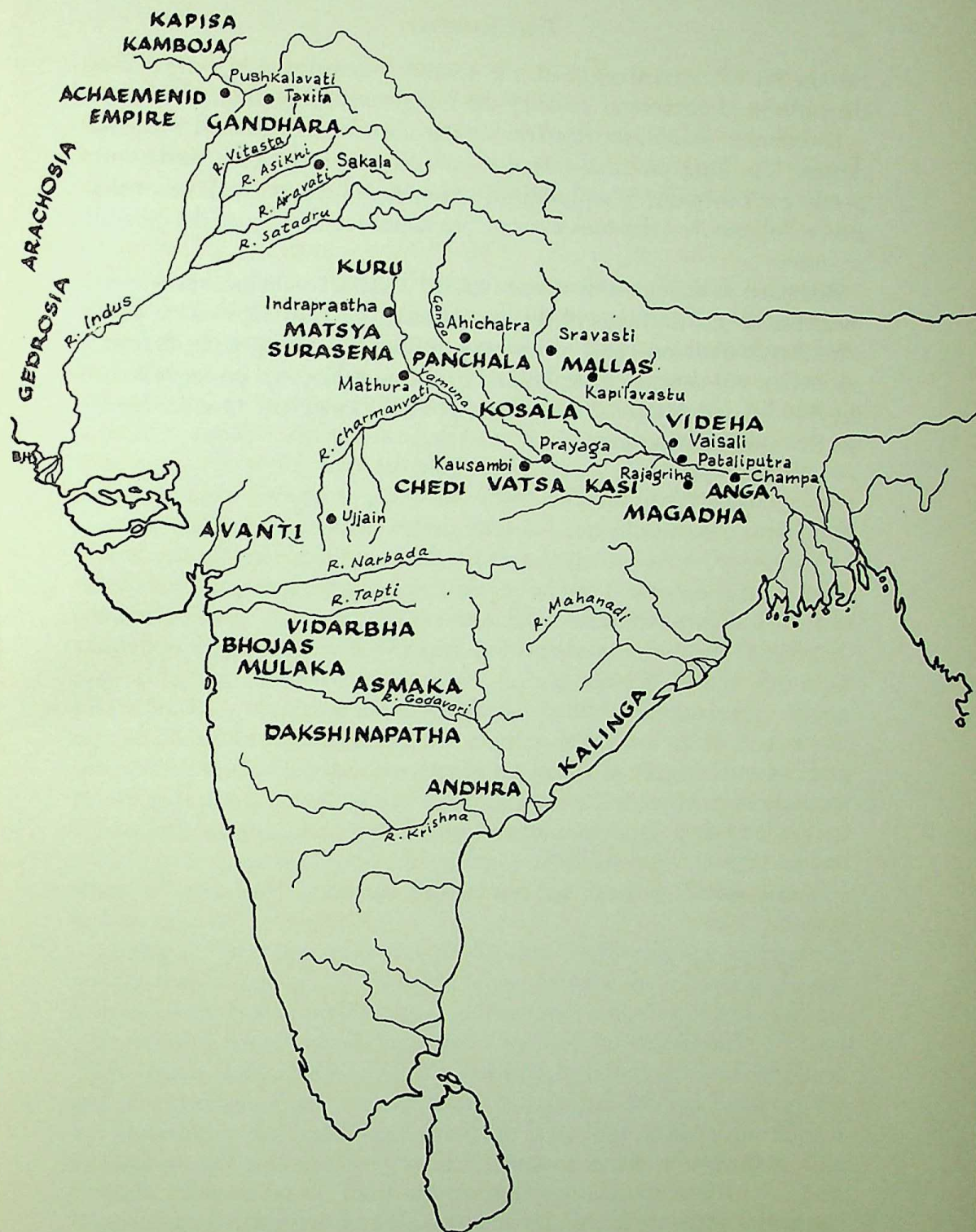
The Buddha's message was simple, his teaching ethical and not metaphysical.

'Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good. Let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth.' (*Dhammapada* 5.)

'This is called progress in the discipline of the Blessed One, if one sees his sin in its sinfulness and refrains from it in the future.' (*Mahavagga* ix. 1. 9.)

A unique consequence of the emergence of the Buddha was the foundation of monasteries. Their establishment was almost fortuitous, being stopping-places on the Buddha's journeys. Later, rules were laid down for their administration.

On the death of the Buddha his remains were divided into eight parts,



INDIA IN THE 6TH CENTURY B.C.

because his followers throughout the country claimed a share—a proof of the widespread impression made by the Enlightened One during his life.

Jainism and Buddhism represent similar ideas in extreme and moderate degrees. The Jains practised extensive penances and believed it meritorious to take one's own life. The Buddhists were more moderate. Both believed it a sin to kill but the Jains took extreme precautions to avoid even the death of an insect.

Both sects in their attitude to caste caused a social revolution but this was incidental to the teachings of the two Masters, for both claimed no break with Aryan tradition—only a new way to liberation. As a result, Brahmin opposition was slow to challenge, and by the time the social consequences of the Buddha and Mahavira were plain, powerful kings had already adopted the tenets of the reformers.

The Alexandrian Invasion

BY THE END OF THE EPIC period, the impetus of invasion from the north-west had died. The original invaders' settlements in the Punjab were cut off from Aryavarta, and orthodox Hindus regarded the tribes of the Punjab as non-Aryan. These tribes, however, still maintained contact with their kinsmen in Iran with whom they had much in common, both racially and linguistically. The division between the tribes of the Punjab and the Hindus of Aryavarta extended also to the world of the gods. In Persian literature, Indra appears as a demon, while in Sanskrit the word Asura—from the Persian High God, Ahura Mazda—came to mean an evil spirit.

The rise of Persia as a formidable military power in the sixth century B.C. had its influence on the history of India. In 612 B.C. the Persians overthrew Nineveh, and in 550 B.C. the ancient Medes line was overthrown, and Cyrus (558–530 B.C.)—who captured Babylon in 538 B.C.—laid the foundation of a vast Iranian Empire which, by the time of Darius Hystaspes (522–486 B.C.), stretched from the Indus to the Mediterranean. Cyrus occupied Gandhara, which in those days probably embraced Kabul and possibly the Peshawar and Rawalpindi districts, and Darius later annexed the Punjab. Darius employed a Greek, Scylax of Caryanda, to explore the Indus, and his journeyings first brought India into touch with Greece.

Herodotus mentions India as paying a fabulous sum (three hundred talents of gold-dust) as annual tribute, and the army of Xerxes included Indian soldiers.

During the next century, India was in close intellectual and commercial contact with Greece. Early Buddhist books describe the voyages of Indian merchantmen. Indian philosophical ideas appeared in Greece and there are close parallels between Buddhism and Orphism. In the *Republic* of Plato ('The Vision of Er the Pamphylian') are stated the Hindu doctrines of *Karma* and reincarnation—'each soul returning to a second life and receiving the one agreeable to his desire'—and (in Book VII, 'The Myth of the Cave') the concept of *Maya*, the 'illusion of the senses', is clearly explained. The Platonic divisions of an ideal society into Guardians, Auxiliaries, and Workers are so much like the Indian caste divisions of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaisyas as to make coincidence unlikely.

By 330 B.C., the power of Persia had declined and Alexander of Macedon,

called the Great, captured the Imperial capital of Persepolis. In the following year he crossed the passes of the Kabul river. In 326 B.C. he entered India and reached the Beas, one of the five rivers of the Punjab, but was prevented from occupying the Gangetic plain by his troops refusing to march farther. This saved Magadha, then ruled by one of the Nine Nandas, for rumours about the kingdom had reached Alexander and he was determined to conquer it. Thus, accepting the Indus as the boundary of his new-won Empire, he left India in 325 B.C.

The invasion of Alexander was in itself only an episode, and its significance lies only in the fact that it established a simple medium of communication between the cultures of India and Greece—for Greek ideas and practice were now active on the soil of northern India.

There were many descriptions of the country and the campaign written by Alexander's officers. Unfortunately, none of these has survived, and the information taken from them appears only as fragments in the writings of later historians and geographers. At Taxila, the capital of Gandhara and a famous university town, they saw many strange customs—a marriage-market where the daughters of the poor were auctioned off; the inhabitants burning their dead or leaving them for the vultures; and the practice of polygamy. From these descriptions, Taxila emerges as a cosmopolitan town, a meeting-place of faiths—for the exposure of the dead is Zoroastrian, and the marriage-market, Babylonian.

Alexander's plans for the consolidation of his conquests were extensive. He intended to divide the Indus plain into provinces and to build at strategic centres strong, walled cities with Greek inhabitants. These he was going to turn into permanent colonies.

Alexander had contacts with various Indian kings, most of whom were fighting each other. Two kings in the Punjab were called by the Greeks Taxiles and Porus: the former after his capital, Taxila, and the latter after the Purus, a tribe whose possessions lay east of the Indus. Ambhi, a son of Taxiles, negotiated with Alexander and, having succeeded to the throne on his father's death, received Alexander in Taxila and was formally invested by him as king. Porus, on the other hand, decided on resistance, and was defeated but reinstated. Various other kings either submitted or retired from their territories. The Indian kings were interested in personal ambition rather than in any coalition against the invader. On Alexander's death, these kingdoms became independent once more, until absorbed by the great power of the expanding Maurya Empire.

On Alexander's sudden death in 323 B.C. disputes arose among the Greek leaders, and forces were removed from India to fight in the west. The eastern provinces of the Empire fell into the hands of Seleucus I, who

The Alexandrian Invasion

39

attempted to recover the Indian colonies. But the situation in India had changed. Chandragupta had established the Maurya Empire, and when Seleucus advanced to the Indus, about 305 B.C., he had come to terms with Chandragupta, leaving him the Indus plain and most of Afghanistan. Bactria, which had remained part of the Seleucid Empire, became, in the middle of the following century, independent and supplied two Greek dynasties for the Punjab, as we shall see.

On the whole, Alexander's invasion left the country undisturbed and no mention of it appears in contemporary Indian literature. Unlike the barbarian invasions of Tamerlane or Nadir Shah—intent on plunder—Alexander's contemplated a Westernization of the East. He brought with him historians and engineers intent not on the narrow mechanics of war but on the permanencies of an active occupation. His death destroyed the dream of a Hellenized Punjab, his grandiose conception remained merely a scratch on the palimpsest of Indian history.

Alexander and the Brahmins

The voyage referred to in the following passage was down the Indus to the ocean. Sabbas was the ruler of the hilly region west of the Lower Indus. The Greeks were particularly interested in the religions they found in northern India, and even persuaded one of the ascetics they interrogated to accompany Alexander to Babylon. The passage quoted here is from Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, written about the middle of the first century A.D.

In this voyage he took ten of the Indian philosophers prisoners who had been most active in persuading Sabbas to revolt, and had caused the Macedonians a great deal of trouble. These men, called Gymnosophists, were reputed to be extremely ready and succinct in their answers, which he made trial of, by putting difficult questions to them, letting them know that those whose answers were not pertinent, should be put to death, of which he made the eldest of them judge. The first being asked which he thought the most numerous, the dead or the living, answered, 'The living, because those who are dead are not at all.' Of the second he desired to know whether the earth or the sea produced the largest beasts; who told him, 'The earth, for the sea is but a part of it.' His question to the third was, which is the cunningest of beasts? 'That', said he, 'which men have not yet found out.' He bade the fourth tell him what argument he used to Sabbas to persuade him to revolt. 'No other', said he, 'than that he should either live or die nobly.' Of the fifth he asked, which was the eldest, night or day? The philosopher replied, 'Day was eldest, by one day at least.' But perceiving Alexander not well satisfied with that account, he added, that he ought not to wonder if strange questions had as strange answers made to them. Then he went on and inquired of the next, what a man

should do to be exceedingly beloved. 'He must be very powerful,' said he, 'without making himself too much feared.' The answer of the seventh to his question, how a man might become a god, was, 'By doing that which was impossible for men to do.' The eighth told him, 'Life is stronger than death, because it supports so many miseries.' And the last, being asked how long he thought it decent for a man to live, said, 'Till death appear more desirable than life.' Then Alexander turned to him whom he had made judge, and commanded him to give sentence. 'All that I can determine', said he, 'is, that they have every one answered worse than another.' 'Nay,' said the King, 'then you shall die first, for giving such a sentence.' 'Not so, O King,' replied the Gymnosophist, 'unless you said falsely that he should die first who made the worst answer.' In conclusion he gave them presents and dismissed them.

Early Voyages to and from India

The *Indika* of Megasthenes, which now survives only in later works, is the source of the sixth book of that great encyclopaedia of the Ancient World, the *Natural History* of Pliny, published in A.D. 77. This book, a geography of India, contains much information, true and absurd, from earlier writers now lost.

C. 17 (19). He [M. Varro] adds that under the direction of Pompey it was ascertained that it is seven days' journey from India to the river Iachrus, which flows into the Oxus, and that people have been conveyed from the Oxus through the Caspian into the Cyrus, and that Indian merchandise can be brought by land to Phasis in Pontus in five days at most.

Book II, c. 67 (67). The same Nepos, when speaking of the northern circumnavigation, relates that to Q. Metellus Celer, the colleague of Afranius in the consulship, but then a proconsul in Gaul, a present was given by the King of the Suevi consisting of some Indians who, sailing from India for the purpose of commerce, had been driven by storms into Germany.

Book VI, c. 23 (26). The journal of the voyage of Onesikritos and Nearchos has neither the names of the stations nor the distances set down in it; and first of all it is not sufficiently explained where and near what river Xylenopolis was—a city founded by Alexander and that from which his expedition started when it left India. Still, the following places mentioned by them are worthy of notice—the town of Arbis, founded by Nearchos in the course of the voyage, and the river Arbis, which is navigable and opposite which lies an island at a distance of seventy *stadia*; Alexandria built by Leonnatus by Alexander's orders in the territories of this people; Argenuus with a convenient harbour; the river Tonberos, which is navigable, and around its banks the Pasirae; then come the Ichthyophagi. . . . In after-times it was considered an undeniable fact that the voyage from Syagrus, a cape in Arabia, reckoned at 1335 miles, can be performed by aid of a west wind which is there called Hippalus. The age that followed

pointed out a shorter route that was also safer by making the voyage from the same cape to Sigerus, a seaport of India; and for a long time this route was followed until one still shorter was discovered by a merchant, and India was brought nearer us through the love of gain. So then at the present day voyages are made to India every year; and companies of archers are carried on board because the Indian seas are infested by pirates. . . . If the wind called Hippalus be blowing, Muziris, the nearest mart of India, can be reached in forty days. It is not a desirable place of call, pirates being in the neighbourhood who occupy a place called Nitrias, and besides it is not well supplied with wares for traffic. Ships besides anchor at a great distance from the shore, and the cargoes have to be landed and shipped by employing boats. At the time I was writing this Caelobothras was the sovereign of that country. Another more convenient harbour of the nation is Neacyndon which is called Becare. There Pandion used to reign, dwelling at a great distance from the mart, in a town in the interior of the country called Modura. The district from which pepper is carried down to Becare in canoes is called Cottonara. None of these names of nations, ports, and cities are to be found in any of the former writers—from which it appears that the names (stations) of the places are changed. Travellers sail back from India in the beginning of the Egyptian month Tybis—our December—or at all events before the sixth day of the Egyptian month Mechir, that is before the Ides of January. In this way they can go and return the same year. They sail from India with a south-east wind, and on entering the Red Sea catch the south-west or south.

Book XI, c. 3 (2). In the Indian Sea are very many and very large living creatures. Among them whales, each 240 feet long and half as broad, and sharks 200 cubits long; and as the Indian locust measures 4 cubits, so the eels in the river Ganges are each 300 feet long.

The Rise of Magadha

THE SEVENTH CENTURY B.C. in northern India had seen the rise of a number of kingdoms which absorbed the smaller independent areas. Of these new kingdoms the most important were Magadha (south Bihar) and Kosala (Oudh). About 540 B.C., under the rule of Bimbisara, Magadha took the lead.

Bimbisara introduced into Magadha a revolutionary instrument—a new type of army, without tribal basis and loyal only to the King. Such an idea was consistent with the conception of a dynastic rather than an elective kingship. The powers of commander-in-chief (*senapati*—‘lord of the army’) were reserved to the heir-apparent. This support of the King’s absolute power could only have been made possible through an organized system of taxation. It is the beginnings of political administration. Tribal support and sanction for the actions of the King were no longer necessary and their replacement was fundamental to expansion.

Bimbisara was succeeded in 490 B.C. by his son Ajatasatru, reviled in Buddhist literature as a parricide—probably a propaganda invention, as he patronized the Jains, a rival sect. Ajatasatru’s son Udaya made his capital at Pataliputra, present-day Patna. The chronology of the next century is extremely vague but it is known that about 413 B.C. the house of Bimbisara was overthrown by a personage, called in tradition Nanda, and his dynasty, that of the Nine Nandas. Very little is known of this episode in the rise of Magadha.

A few years after Alexander left India in 325 B.C., the Nanda dynasty was in turn overthrown by Chandragupta Maurya. Little is known of his origins, but one source refers to him as an illegitimate son of the reigning Nanda king, and also the army commander-in-chief. His first attempt to win the throne is said to have failed and he fled with his Brahmin adviser, Kautilya—who was later to write an important manual of public administration, the *Arthashastra*—to the Punjab, where he met Alexander and urged him to invade Magadha. Two years later (324 or 323 B.C.) after news came of Alexander’s death at Babylon, he and his adviser organized a popular revolt which ended Greek rule in the Punjab. In 322 B.C., Chandragupta returned to Magadha with a large army, killed the Nanda king and occupied Pataliputra. By 305 B.C., he was powerful enough, as we have seen, to

force an agreement with Seleucus, and an alliance by marriage was arranged.

About 302 B.C., an ambassador at Pataliputra, Megasthenes, wrote a detailed account of the India he knew. This work now exists only in quotations in the works of later writers such as the geographer Strabo. The fragments do not add up to a complete view of the times, but a picture can be built up which is more or less true.

The capital, Pataliputra, on the northern bank of the Son, is described as being of the shape of a parallelogram nine miles by two, surrounded by a deep moat connected with the river. The city wall was of timber with draw-bridges and towers. The well-planned streets contained bazaars, theatres, and gambling-places; these and the race-tracks, inns, and meeting-places for guilds and sects, were crowded with people and animals. Houses were of two or three storeys and, as they were constructed of wood, an elaborate system of fire precautions was enforced.

At the centre of the city was the King's palace, surrounded by a walled park with ornamental lakes and exotic birds. The palace itself was of wood, plated with gold and silver and elaborately ornamented. The King went always in fear of assassination—all food was tasted in his presence, and he never slept twice in the same bed. An elaborate web of spies and *agents provocateurs* kept him informed of the secrets of the city, and 'enemies of the State' were inclined to disappear without trace.

Surrounded by his slave-women, who cooked his food and entertained him with dancing and music, Chandragupta seldom left the palace except at religious and other festivals. He moved in great state:

'Then comes a great host of attendants in holiday dress, with golden vessels, such as huge basins and goblets six feet broad, tables, chairs of state, drinking vessels, and lavers, all of Indian copper, and many of them set with jewels, such as emeralds, beryls, and Indian garnets; others bear robes embroidered in gold thread and lead wild beasts, such as buffaloes, leopards, and tame lions, and rare birds in cages.

'The Amazons lined the streets, and kept the spectators at a safe distance. It was death to come inside the line of women.'

About the organization of this authoritarian régime we have ample information, in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. A civil service existed and there were departments for accounts, revenue, mines, arsenals, taxation, agriculture, trade, and navigation.

Everything was organized in the interests of the State. Private trade was not encouraged, as the State was anxious to preserve its lucrative monopolies. Prices were controlled.

'Wherever there is a glut of trade goods the trade superintendent shall have them sold in one [central] place. None others may be sold as long as these remain unsold. The sale to be by merchants who are paid daily wages and are favourably inclined to the people.' (*Arthashastra*, 4. 2.)

'No commodity may be sold [by a private trader] in the place of its origin.' (*Arthashastra*, 2. 22.)

Toll had to be paid on the movement of merchandise from one place to another.

The State owned slaughter-houses and gambling places and took 5 per cent of the winnings—guaranteeing that there were no 'loaded' dice. Wines and prostitution had each a separate Government department. Metals were strictly controlled—'from mining comes the treasury, from the treasury the army has its origin; through the treasury may the earth, full of treasures, be conquered'. (*Arthashastra*, 4. 1.)

The expansionist tendencies of Magadha had economic roots, and war was considered an extension of trade.

'This explains the selection of trade routes: My teacher says that of two trade routes, one by water and another by land, the former is better inasmuch as it is less expensive but productive of large profit. Not so, says Kautilya, for a water route is liable to obstruction, not permanent, a source of imminent dangers, and incapable of defence, whereas a land route is of the opposite nature. Of water routes, one along the shore and another through the open sea, the shore route is better as it touches many trading port towns; likewise, river navigation is better as it is uninterrupted, with avoidable or endurable dangers. My teacher says that of land routes, that which leads to the Himalayas is better than that which leads to the south. Not so, says Kautilya, for with the exception of blankets, skins, and horses, other articles of trade such as conch shells, diamonds, precious stones, pearls, and gold are available in plenty in the south. Of routes leading to the south, either that trade route which traverses a large number of mines, which is frequented by people, and which is less expensive and troublesome, or that route by taking which plenty of merchandise of various kinds can be obtained, is the better. . . . Of a cart-track and a path for shoulder-loads, a cart-track is better, as it affords facilities for transport on a larger scale.' (*Arthashastra*, 7. 12.)

A very careful census of resources both physical and human existed. There was a registrar for every five or ten villages in the country and one for every ten, twenty, or forty households in the city.

Confiscation of property was commonplace, simple accusation—often

The Rise of Magadha

45

false—making personal wealth forfeit to the State. In fact, the Empire of Chandragupta was, as K. M. Panikkar has described it, a police State, though the normal life of the people was seldom interfered with. Kautilya's system—revenue administration, bureaucracy, and police—was the basis of all later Indian kingdoms, the Mughal Empire and the British who followed.

In 298 B.C., Chandragupta either died or retired from his throne to become a Jain monk. Of his successor, his son Bindusara, little is known though it is probable that he further expanded the Empire. Relations with Greece continued. Ambassadors are reported from Antioch and Alexandria. On the death of Bindusara in 273 B.C., we come to the reign of Asoka, the first Indian ruler whose personality throws an immense shadow against the backcloth of Indian history.

The Empire of Asoka

ASOKA, WHEN HE WAS crown prince, had ruled as Viceroy of Taxila and later of Ujjain. When he succeeded to the throne there was little to distinguish him from any other Hindu ruler. In 261 B.C., however, he determined to add to his Empire Kalinga, or Orissa, the last of the independent States on the Bay of Bengal.

In his campaign, Asoka tells us, 125,000 people were taken captive and 100,000 killed; even Brahmins and ascetics were murdered. The Maurya Empire now extended from the Himalayas to Mysore, from the borders of Assam to the Hindu Kush.

Shortly afterwards, the Emperor was converted to Buddhism by a famous Buddhist teacher, Upagupta of Mathura, and shaken by the suffering and misery of war, he turned to a philanthropic administration, moral reform, and the propagation of the teachings of the Buddha.

Asoka caused Edicts to be cut into rocks and pillars to demonstrate to the people the way of compassion, but he was not content with a parade of moral admonitions. Asoka's aim was to produce radical changes in the administration of government. The harsh laws of Chandragupta were relaxed, hospitals were erected. One of his chief reforms was to put into practice the Buddha's law of *ahimsa*, of 'charity and tenderness to all living things'.

'This rescript on *dhamma* [morality] has been caused to be written by King Piyadasi, Beloved-of-the-Gods. Here [in my kingdom] no living being must be killed and sacrificed. And no *samaja* [festival meeting] must be held. For King Piyadasi, Beloved-of-the-Gods, sees much evil in festival meetings. Nevertheless, there are some [sorts of] festival meetings which are also considered meritorious by King Piyadasi. . . .

'Formerly in the kitchen of King Piyadasi . . . many hundred thousands of animals were killed daily for making curry. But now . . . only three animals are being killed for curry: two peacocks and one deer, though even this deer not regularly. Even these three animals shall not be killed in the future.'

Asoka wished to be thought of as the father of his people. 'Just as a man, having made over his child to a skilful nurse, feels confident and says to

himself, "The skilful nurse is eager to care for the happiness of my child", even so my Governors have been created for the welfare and happiness of my country.'

Perhaps the most significant action of Asoka's reign was the sending of Buddhist missionaries to other countries: to Ceylon and Burma, to the north, Gandhara and Kashmir, to the Deccan and the Tamil country, to Egypt and Macedonia. Of these missions, the only one to meet with success was that to Ceylon, which remained a true centre of the faith, and its preserver, when Buddhism had died in the country in which it first appeared.

The administration of the Empire was divided amongst three viceroys, at Taxila for the north-west, at Ujjain for the west and south-west, and at Kalinga for the south-east, the central regions remaining under the direct control of the Emperor.

Asoka's moral ideas were simple and practical. Religious toleration and respect is often recorded in the Edicts, and Asoka was not the champion of any particular creed but of a way of life. He is often thought of as a 'Buddhist' Emperor, as if he was thus no longer a Hindu. Asoka was merely a Hindu monarch belonging to a particular sect, for the separateness of Buddhism from the mainstream of Hindu thought was, in the eyes of its contemporaries, only as sectarian as the various faces of Christianity today.

Even Asoka's foreign policy was based upon co-existence rather than expansion. He hoped that 'the unsubdued borderers should not be afraid of me, that they should trust me, and should receive from me happiness not sorrow'. The extent to which this hope was fulfilled is not known, but the provisions of certain of his Edicts operated even outside the territories of the Empire.

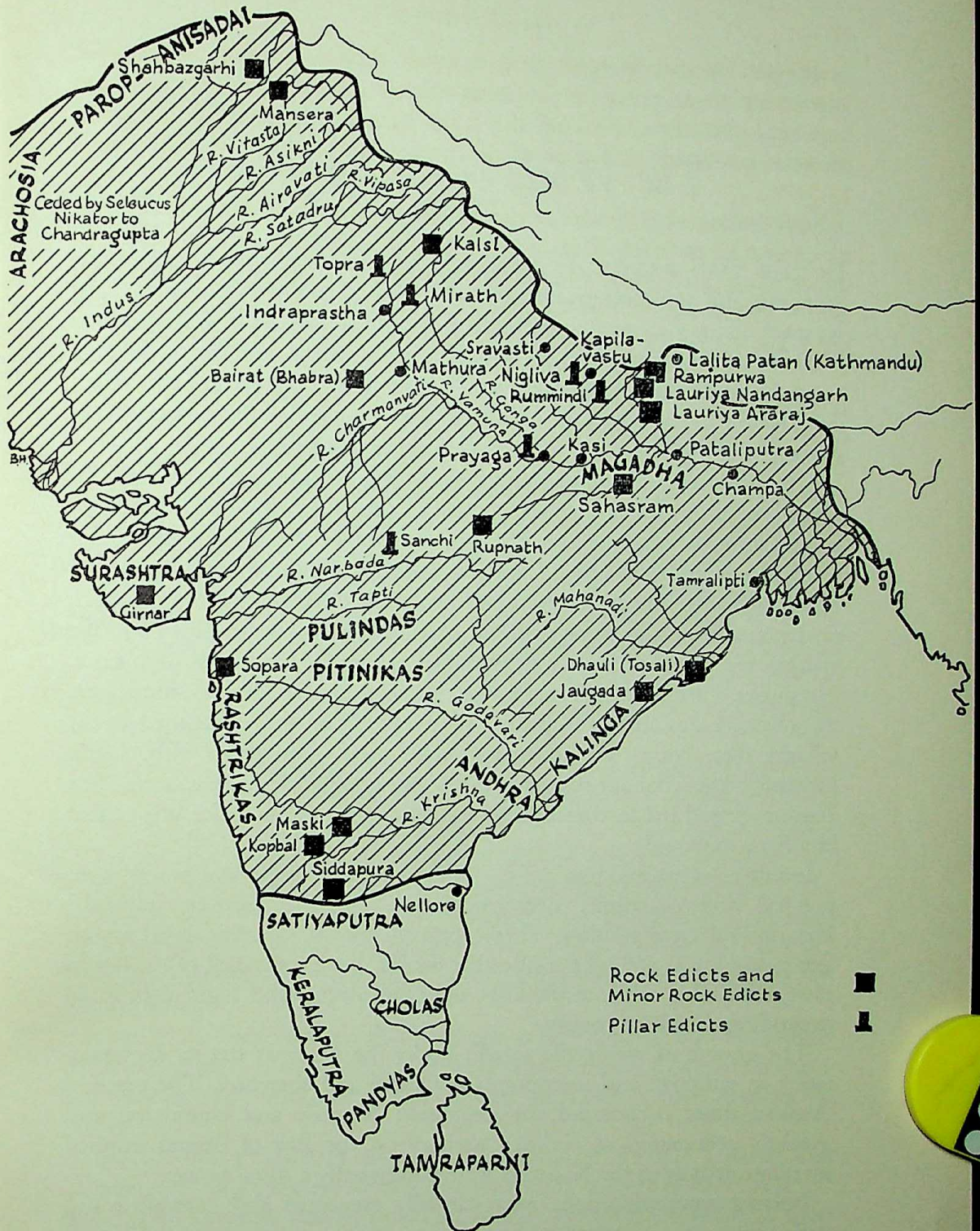
'Everywhere in the dominions of King Piyadasi, Beloved-of-the-Gods, and likewise among his borderers . . . everywhere two kinds of medical treatment were established by King Piyadasi, Beloved-of-the-Gods: medical treatment for men and medical treatment for beasts. And wherever there were no herbs that are beneficial to men and beneficial to cattle, everywhere they were caused to be imported and to be planted. On the roads wells were caused to be dug, and trees were caused to be planted for the use of cattle and men.'

It must not be thought that the reign of Asoka was entirely devoted to the propagation of certain moral ideas, or that the Emperor was a philosopher-king with the emphasis on the philosopher. As an administrator he must have been efficient. There cannot have been any weakening of the power of the central authority, for no attempt—following the traditional pattern—was ever made to remove Asoka by force, nor did his powerful Greek

neighbours attempt to emulate Alexander. Asoka founded an Imperial administration on revolutionary methods, and, in doing so, changed the bases of society by producing the peace necessary for ordered economic expansion, and an assurance of the justice and morality of the central authority.

The influence of Asoka on Buddhism is as significant as that of Buddhism on Asoka. Buddhism itself began to change, and the canon repeatedly draws a parallel between the 'emperor with the wheel' insignia, and the Buddha who turns the 'wheel of the Law'. An attempt was made to secure unity among Buddhists, and a council was held at Pataliputra which resolved and determined an authoritative canon of the scriptures.

Asoka died in 232 B.C. His reign is unique in history—here was an Emperor who ruled upon the established principles of a religious creed. His experiment in administration did not long survive him. In 185 B.C., the last Maurya king was murdered by his commander-in-chief, and the Maurya Empire began to disintegrate.



THE EMPIRE OF ASOKA c. 250 B.C.

The World of the Mauryas

IN THE TWO PRECEDING chapters we have seen something of the economic and administrative organization of the Empire of Magadha. Here we must discover something of the everyday life of the people. Of all aspects of society under the Mauryas we have ample documentation: the *Arthashastra*, a sort of administrator's *vade mecum*, gives us the politico-economic order; the *Dharmasastras*, a picture of life as seen by the law-makers; and the *Kamasutra* of Vatsyayana, a view of social life and behaviour.

One aspect of the economic order in the pre-Asokan Empire is reminiscent of certain activities recently reported in the U.S.S.R.—the compulsory colonization of virgin lands. These areas were occupied by Sudra cultivators, protected by the army. Land was assigned to the tax-paying holder for his lifetime only. The settlers were either enticed from other areas by promises, or deported from the over-populated cities. No priests were allowed in the villages and no association was permitted except for the few of high caste. No public entertainment was allowed. 'Actors, dancers, singers, musicians, raconteurs, bards are not to disturb the work. From the helplessness of the villages there comes the concentration of men upon their fields, hence increase in taxes, labour supply, wealth, and grain.' (*Arthashastra*, 2. 1.) The Asokan period led to considerable relaxation, but the colonies still existed as a State monopoly.

Industry—organized into guilds—represented a new focus of power, both political and economic, demonstrating a cleavage between industrial strength and caste-position. These powerful guilds, enjoying royal favour and patronage as well as considerable wealth, were composed of the lowest caste, the Sudra, while at the same time they occupied a high place in an expanding merchant society.

The growth of mercantile wealth under the Mauryas has its documentation in sculpture and inscriptions at Sanchi and elsewhere. The peace in Asokan times encouraged the expansion of trade and commerce, and Asoka's occupation of Kalinga territory on the Bay of Bengal inspired maritime activity as the Kalingas were traditionally a naval power.

Internal communications were carefully organized and controlled and trade routes were protected by State forces.

The growth of trade-wealth produced an urban aristocracy intent upon

surrounding itself with the luxuries of life. Pataliputra, the capital of Magadha, has already been briefly mentioned. Descriptions of its culture, of its university, and the beauty of its buildings are continually appearing in the literature of the time. Only less important than Pataliputra were the cities of Vaisali, Ujjain, Benares, and Taxila.

In these cities emerged the rich man-about-town, sophisticated, leading a life of refinement and gaiety. The *Kamasutra*, which has acquired an undeservedly dubious reputation in the West, is basically a guide to behaviour, an etiquette book, a manual of taste for the new modes of city life. From the *Kamasutra* we have a clear picture of high society under the Mauryas.

The *nagarika*, or 'town-man', lives in a house divided into the men's and women's quarters. It is surrounded by an elegant garden planted with flowers and fruit trees and usually with an ornamental pond. There are terraces on which to hold parties by moonlight. Inside, rooms are luxuriously furnished with magnificent carpets on the floors, for chairs are not in fashion. The toilet of the young man-about-town is carefully described. After the bath, taken daily, his body is rubbed with perfumed ointment, his lips are reddened with dye. His clothes consist of both an upper and lower garment, the former of fine cloth or silk and sometimes coloured. The quality of this upper cloth is an indication of wealth and breeding. All is not indolent foppery, however; massage is widely used and the *nagarika* must, by exercise, keep his body slim and attractive.

Generally two meals are eaten, with rice, wheat, barley, and milk. Meat also seems to have been a staple part of the diet. Wine, both sweet and dry, is drunk. The *Kamasutra* presents a picture of a leisure class, enjoying festivals and amusements, gambling and racing. This life was a concomitant of wealth and prosperity and bears no relation to the condition of the people.

Festivals were occasions which all could enjoy and take part in. Gambling was widespread both in village and town. Hunting was popular and boating, swimming, and archery were subjects for competition amongst the younger men.

Among the sixty-four arts that a refined and well-educated man should command, a high place was given to music and dancing, though musicians and dancers from the caste point of view occupied a low position in society.

Literacy was widespread and the universities of Taxila, Ujjain, and Benares were held in great repute. Teaching was mainly in the hands of Brahmins, but under Asoka Buddhist monks established schools in their monasteries. Studies were mainly literary and religious, and grammar, rhetoric, economics, and politics were generally part of the curriculum.

Education must have penetrated fairly deeply into the mass of the people and there must have existed a literate middle class to supply the immense civil service of the Empire. There would also seem little point in covering the country with written Edicts if there were too few people capable of reading them.

Technical education was organized by trade guilds and standards were laid down for professional apprenticeships and skills.

The position of women in Maurya times is not particularly clear though considerable freedom of movement seems to have been permitted.

All these manifestations of a leisure class resting upon the broadening basis of trade-wealth are indicative of changes in the class-structure. The appearance of concentrations of wealth, and the importance—for the emerging mercantile society—of a new relationship between capital and production, made it necessary to adapt the existing caste-structure to class needs.

One aspect of this process is the return of Sanskrit. The vulgarization of Sanskrit into a general language of communication, Prakrit—as from Classical to spoken Latin—can be seen in Asokan inscriptions, but with the move towards a capitalist society, pure Sanskrit emerges as the language of the upper classes, the accent of wealth and power. Similarly, in later times Persian and English, the languages of the new rulers, displace Sanskrit as the instrument of the upper classes. The Sanskrit of the *Kamasutra* is the equivalent of the French of eighteenth-century Europe—the language of taste and culture, totally unrepresentative of the mass of the people, a vehicle of communication between members of a leisure class.

The development of Sanskrit as a language is due to the immense achievement of Panini (c. sixth century B.C.) in producing a grammar. The later *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* are full of semantic mysticism, paradox, and contradiction. By the time of the Mauryas, the language had become imprecise but exquisite, the plaything of a leisure class with no need for a technical vocabulary but ample time to argue about meaning. The possession of an almost secret language, every phrase and even word requiring long commentaries and exegesis, was an instrument of class solidarity. Even later works on painting and architecture are not of great value. Ritual, philosophy, theology, and poetry form the bulk of Sanskrit literature.

The changes in the economy also provided a new place for the Brahmin priesthood. Religion became the tool of the State and supplied sanction for social reorganization. Caste—its chief contribution to the organization of society—became the mechanism of the new class-structure.

The changing role of the Brahmin is reflected in the development of new gods and the adaption of others to the changing needs of an acquisitive

society. Most of the Vedic gods were reshaped, and Vishnu-Krishna became the most popular. Prominent local cults were absorbed, and this syncretism even permitted the entry of foreigners into the caste-structure.

'This eagle-topped pillar of Vasudeva, god of gods, has been erected here by Heliodorus, a votary of Bhagavat, a son of Diya, man of Taxila, ambassador of the Greeks, who has come from the great king Antialkidas to king Kāsiputa Bhāgabhadra, the saviour, who prospers in the fourteenth current year of his reign.'

Siva is also prominent, and his wife, the mother goddess Parvati. The cult of Krishna was particularly attractive to the common people; an athlete, and also a cow-herd, he was the husband of many goddesses. His appeal was wide, as he could be worshipped in any of his aspects while yet supplying a sense of unity to his worshippers, however diverse their conceptions of the god.

Of art under the Mauryas there are surviving relics. Asoka was a prolific builder and introduced the use of stone instead of wood. The palace at Pataliputra, described enthusiastically by Chinese pilgrims, has disappeared leaving only scanty traces for the pick of the archaeologist to uncover.

The principal remains are the rock-inscriptions, the pillars, the *stupas*, and some cave-dwellings. The *stupa* was originally a burial-mound raised over the ashes of a dead king. The Buddha, as will be remembered, was of the Kshatriya caste and after his death his relics were buried under mounds of this kind. The most famous of these is the 'Great Stupa' of Sanchi in Bhopal, though the original building of Asoka's time has now disappeared under sandstone blocks. The sculptured work of the Mauryas is extensive, unsophisticated and naïve. In displaying the story of the life of the Buddha, the sculptors used the commonplaces of everyday life so that we can see the customs and dress of the times documented in stone.

The pillars on which Asoka had his famous Edicts inscribed are huge tapering monoliths of hard sandstone, weighing at least fifty tons, and rising forty or fifty feet high. Their surface is so polished that later travellers thought they were made of metal. The engineering skill required to transport and erect these immense columns was of a very high order.

Monastic communities were in the habit of occupying, during the rainy season, *viharas* (monasteries) cut in the hillsides, and many were elaborately carved in imitation of the wooden buildings of earlier times.

Such jewellery and reliquary-cases as have survived show that the minor arts had reached a high standard, no doubt because of the demand of the new mercantile classes for the outward show of wealth and power.

The India of Megasthenes

The following passages are extracted from Strabo's *Geography* (translated by Teubner), Book XV. The author's dates are not accurately known, but he is believed to have died in A.D. 24. Megasthenes (see p. 43) was an ambassador to Pataliputra about 302 B.C. for Seleucus I Nicator, one of Alexander's generals who made an expedition against Chandragupta some years after Alexander's death.

On Caste

39. He [Megasthenes] says that the population of India is divided into seven castes. The first in rank but smallest in number are the philosophers. Persons who wish to offer sacrifices or perform other sacred rites employ their services on their private account, but the kings employ them on the public account, at what is called the Great Assembly, where at the beginning of the New Year all the philosophers repair to the king at the gates. Here any of them who may have committed anything useful to writing, or observed any means for improving the crops and the cattle, or anything of advantage to the State, declares it publicly. If anyone is detected giving false information, thrice the law enjoins him to be silent for the rest of his life, but he who proves to have been correct in his observations is exempted from paying any taxes or contributions.

40. The second caste consists of husbandmen, who form the bulk of the population and are of a very mild and gentle disposition. They are exempted from military service, and cultivate their lands undisturbed by fear. They do not go to cities, either on business or to take part in their tumults. It therefore frequently happens that at the same time, and in the same part of the country, men may be seen marshalled for battle and risking their lives against the enemy, while other men are ploughing or digging in perfect security under the protection of these soldiers. The whole of the land belongs to the Crown, and the husbandmen till it on condition of receiving as wages one-fourth of the produce.

41. The third caste consists of shepherds and hunters, who alone are permitted to hunt and keep cattle and to sell beasts of burden or to let them out on hire. In return for clearing the land of wild beasts and birds which infest sown fields, they receive an allowance of corn from the king. They lead a wandering life and dwell in tents. No private person is permitted to keep a horse or an elephant. The possession of either is regarded as a royal privilege. These animals are under the charge of grooms.

46. After hunters and shepherds, the fourth caste follows, consisting, he says, of those who work at trades, vend wares and are employed in bodily labour. Some of these pay taxes, and render to the State certain prescribed services. But the armour-makers and ship-builders receive wages and provisions from the kings for whom they alone work. The commander-in-chief supplies the army with weapons, and the admiral of the fleet lets out ships on hire both to those who undertake voyages and to merchants.

47. The fifth caste consists of fighting-men, who, when not engaged in active service,

pass their time in idleness and drinking. They are maintained at the king's expense, and hence are always ready, when occasion calls, to take the field, for they carry nothing of their own with them but their own bodies.

48. The sixth caste consists of the inspectors. To them is entrusted the superintendence of all that goes on, and of making reports privately to the king. The city inspectors employ as their coadjutors the courtesans of the city, and the inspectors of the camp the courtesans who follow the army. The best and most trustworthy men are appointed to fill these offices.

49. The seventh caste consists of the counsellors and assessors of the king. To them belong the offices of State, the tribunals of justice, and the general administration of public affairs. No one is allowed to marry out of his own caste, or to exchange one profession or trade for another, or to follow more than one business. An exception is made in favour of a member of the philosopher caste on account of his superior merit.

On Philosophers and Religion

59. According to another principle of division, he makes two sects of the philosophers, one of which he calls the Brachmanes and the other the Sarmanes. The Brachmanes are held in higher estimation, for they agree more exactly in their opinions. From the time of their conception in the womb they are under the care and guardianship of learned men who go to the mother, and under the pretence of using some incantations for the welfare of herself and her unborn child, in reality give her prudent hints and counsels, and the women who listen to them most willingly are thought to be the most fortunate in their offspring. After their birth the children are in the care of one person after another, and as they advance in years their masters are men of superior accomplishments. The philosophers reside in a grove in front of the city within a moderate-sized enclosure. They live in a simple style and lie on pallets of straw and [deer] skins. They abstain from animal food and sexual pleasures; and occupy their time in listening to serious discourse and in imparting knowledge to willing ears. But the hearer is not permitted to speak or cough, or even spit, otherwise he is cast out from their society that very day as being a man without self-control. After living in this manner for seven-and-thirty years, each individual retires to his own possessions, where he lives in security and under less restraint, wearing robes of muslin and a few gold ornaments on his fingers and in his ears. They eat flesh, but not that of animals which assist man in his labours, and abstain from hot and highly seasoned food. They marry as many wives as they please, with a view of having many children, for from many wives greater advantages are derived. As they do not possess slaves, they need all the more to have at ready command the services of their children. The Brachmanes do not communicate a knowledge of philosophy to their wives, lest they should divulge any of the forbidden mysteries to the profane, if they became depraved, or lest they should desert them if they became good philosophers; for no one who despises alike both pleasure and pain, life and death, is willing to be subject to another; and this is the character both of a good man and of a good woman.

Their discourse turns most frequently on death. They regard this life as the time, so to speak, when the child within the womb becomes mature, and death as a birth into a real and happy life for those that are philosophers. On this account they undergo much discipline as a preparation for death. They consider nothing that befalls men to be either good or bad, for otherwise some persons would not be affected with sorrow and others with joy by the very same things, their notions being as insane as dreams, nor would the same persons be affected at different times with sorrow and joy by the very same things. With regard to ideas about physical phenomena, our author says that they display great simplicity, for they are better in their actions than in their reasonings, their belief being chiefly based upon fables. On many points, however, their opinions coincide with those of the Greeks, for the Brachmanes say with them that the world was created, and is liable to destruction, that it is of a spheroidal figure, and that the Deity who made and governs it is diffused through all its parts. They hold that the principles of all things are different, but that water was the principle employed in the formation of the world; that in addition to the four elements there is a fifth nature from which the heaven and the stars were produced, and that the earth is situated in the centre of the universe. Concerning generation, the nature of the soul, and many other subjects, they express views similar to those of the Greeks. They wrap up their doctrines about the immortality of the soul and judgment in Hades in fables after the manner of Plato. This is the account which Megasthenes gives of the Brachmanes.

60. Of the Sarmanes the most honourable, he says, are those called the Hylobioi. They live in the forests, subsist on leaves and wild fruits, wear garments made from the bark of trees, and abstain from wine and commerce with women. They communicate with the kings who consult them by messengers regarding the causes of things, and who through them worship and supplicate the Deity. Next in honour to the Hylobioi are the physicians, for they apply philosophy to the study of the nature of man. They are frugal in their habits, but do not live in the fields. Their food consists of rice and barley-meal, which every one gives who is asked, as well as every one who receives them as a guest. By their knowledge of medicine they can make persons have a numerous offspring, and make also the children to be either male or female. They effect cures rather by regulating diet than by the use of medicines. The remedies in most repute are ointments and plasters. All others they suppose to partake largely of a noxious nature. Both this class and the other class of persons practise fortitude as well by undergoing active toil as by enduring suffering, so that they will remain motionless for a whole day in one fixed posture. Besides these there are diviners and sorcerers and those who are conversant with the rites and customs relating to the dead, who go about villages and towns begging. Those who are more cultured than these, and mix more with mankind, inculcate the vulgar opinions concerning Hades, which they think conducive to piety and sanctity. Women study philosophy with some of them, but they too abstain from sexual intercourse.

62. He makes mention of some strange and unusual customs which existed at Taxila.

Those who are unable from poverty to bestow their daughters in marriage, expose them for sale in the market-place in the flower of their age, a crowd being assembled by sound of the shells and drums, which are also used for sounding the war-note. When any person steps forward, first the back of the girl as far as the shoulders is uncovered for his examination, and then the parts in front, and if she pleases him and allows herself at the same time to be persuaded, they cohabit on such terms as may be agreed upon. The dead are thrown out to be devoured by vultures. The custom of having many wives prevails here, and is common among other races. He says that he had heard from some persons of wives burning themselves along with their deceased husbands and doing so gladly; and that those women who refused to burn themselves were held in disgrace. The same things have been stated by other writers.

63. Onesikritos says that he himself was sent to converse with these sages. For Alexander heard that these men went about naked, inured themselves to hardships, and were held in highest honour; that when invited, they did not go to other persons, but requested such to come to them if they wished to participate in their exercises or conversations. Such being their principles, Alexander neither thought it consistent with his dignity to go to them nor cared to compel them to do anything that was contrary to their inclinations and their native customs. He therefore dispatched Onesikritos to them, who relates that he found at the distance of twenty *stadia* from the city fifteen men standing in different postures, sitting or lying down naked, who did not move from these positions until the evening, when they returned to the city. The most difficult thing to endure was the heat of the sun, which was so violent that no one else could without pain endure to walk on the ground at midday with bare feet.

65. They busy themselves with inquiries concerning natural phenomena, prognostics, rains, droughts, and diseases. When they repair to the city they disperse themselves in the market-place. If they happen to meet any who carries figs or bunches of grapes, they take what he bestows without giving anything in return. If he carries oil, he pours it over them, and they are anointed with it. Every wealthy house is open to them, even to the apartments of the women. On entering they share the repast and join in the conversation. It is considered most disgraceful to have any bodily disease. Hence when one suspects himself to be infected he rids himself of life by means of fire, for having prepared a funeral pile and anointed himself, he settles himself upon the pyre, orders it to be kindled, and remains motionless while he is burning.

66. Nearchos gives the following account of the Sages. Some of the Brachmanes take part in political life, and attend the kings as counsellors. The others are engaged in the study of nature. Women study philosophy along with them, and all lead an austere life. With respect to the customs of the other Indians, he informs us that their laws, whether those applicable to the community or to individuals, are not committed to writing, and are quite different from those of other nations. For example, among some tribes it is the custom to offer virgins as a prize to the victor in a boxing-match, so that they may be married though portionless. Among other tribes again the land is cultivated by families

in common, and when the crops are collected, each person takes a load for his support throughout the year. The remainder of the produce is burned to give them a reason for setting to work anew, and not remaining idle. Their weapons consist of a bow and arrow which are three cubits long, or a javelin and a shield, and a broadsword three cubits long. Instead of bridles they use muzzles which differ little from halters, and the lips are perforated with spikes.

67. With a view to show their ingenuity in works of art, he relates that when they saw sponges in use among the Macedonians, they imitated them by sewing hairs, thin strings, and threads into wool; when the wool had been pressed into felt, they partly carded it and partly dyed it of colours. Many of them also quickly became makers of currycombs and of vessels for oil. They write letters, he says, upon cloth which has been very closely woven, but the other writers affirm that they do not employ written characters. They use copper which has been fused but not wrought. He does not state the reason of this, although he mentions the strange result of the practice, that if vessels of this material fall to the ground they break like earthenware. In the accounts of India, the following custom is also mentioned, that instead of prostrating themselves before their kings and all persons of high rank and authority, it is usual to address them with prayers. The country produces precious stones such as crystals and garnets of every kind, and also pearls.

69. The following particulars are also stated by the historians. The Indians worshipped Zeus Ombrios (i.e. the Rainy), the river Ganges, and the indigenous deities of the country. When the king washes his hair they celebrate a great festival, and send him great presents, each person seeking to outrival his neighbour in displaying his wealth. They say that of the gold-digging ants some are winged, and that the Indian rivers, like the Iberian [Georgian], carry down gold-dust. In the processions at their festivals, many elephants adorned with gold and silver are in the train, as well as four-horsed chariots and yokes of oxen. Kleitarchos mentions four-wheeled carriages carrying trees of the large-leaved sort, from which were suspended in cages different kinds of tame birds, among which he speaks of the orion as that with the sweetest note, and of another called the katreus which was the most beautiful in appearance, and had the most variegated plumage. In figure it approached nearest to the peacock.

70. The Pramnai are philosophers opposed to the Brachmanes, and are contentious and fond of argument. They ridicule the Brachmanes who study physiology and astronomy as fools and impostors. Some of them are called the Pramnai of the mountains, others the Gymnetai, and others again the Pramnai of the city or the Pramnai of the country. Those of the mountains wear deer-skins and carry wallets filled with roots and drugs, professing to cure diseases by means of incantations, charms and amulets. The Gymnetai, in accordance with their name, are naked, and live generally in the open air, practising endurance, as I have already mentioned, for seven-and-thirty years. Women live in their society without sexual commerce.

71. The Pramnai of the city live in towns and wear muslin robes, while those of the

country clothe themselves with the skins of fawns or antelopes. In a word, the Indians wear white apparel—white muslin and linen (contrary to the statements of those who say that they wear garments dyed of florid hues); all of them wear long hair and long beards, plait their hair and bind it with a fillet.

On City Administration

50. Of the magistrates some have the charge of the market, others of the city, others of the soldiery. Some superintend the rivers, measure the land, as in Egypt, and inspect the sluices by which water is let out from the main canals into their branches, so that every one may have an equal supply of it. These persons have charge also of the hunters, and have the power of rewarding or punishing them according to their deserts. They collect the taxes and superintend the occupations connected with land, as those of the woodcutters, the carpenters, the blacksmiths, and the miners. They make the public roads, and at every ten *stadia* set up a pillar to indicate the by-roads and distances.

51. Those who have charge of the city are divided into six bodies of five each. The first have the inspection of everything relating to the industrial arts, the second entertain strangers, assign them lodgings, observe their mode of life by means of the attendants whom they attach to them, and escort them out of the country, or, if they die, send home their property, take care of them in sickness, and when they die, bury them. The third body consists of those who inquire at what time and in what manner births and deaths occur, not only for the purpose of imposing a tax, but also of preventing births or deaths, whether among the high or low from being concealed. The fourth body is occupied with retail and barter. Its members have charge of weights and measures, and see that products in season are sold by public notice. No one is allowed to deal in a variety of articles unless he pays a double tax. The fifth body supervises manufactured articles and sells them by public notice. What is new is sold separately from what is old, and there is a fine imposed for mixing them together. The sixth and last body consists of those who collect the tenth of the price of the articles sold. Fraud in the payment of this tax is punished with death. Such are the functions which these bodies separately discharge. In their collective capacity they have charge both of their special departments and of matters affecting the public welfare, such as the repairs of public works, the regulation of prices, and the care of markets, harbours, and temples.

52. Next to the city magistrates there is a third governing body which directs military affairs. This also consists of six divisions with five members to each. One division is associated with the admiral of the fleet, another with the superintendent of the bullock-teams, used for transporting military engines, food for the soldiers, provender for the cattle, and other military requisites. They supply attendants who beat a drum, and others who carry gongs; grooms also for the horses, and mechanists and their assistants. By the sound of the gong they send out foragers to bring in grass, and by rewards and punishments ensure the work being done with dispatch and safety. The third division has charge of the infantry, the fourth of the horses, the fifth of the war-chariots, and the sixth

of the elephants. There are royal stables for the horses and elephants, and also a royal magazine for the arms, because the soldier has to return his arms to the magazine, and his horse and his elephant to the stables. They use the elephant without bridles. The chariots are drawn on the march by oxen, but the horses are led along by a halter that their legs may not be galled and inflamed, nor their spirits damped by drawing chariots. In addition to the charioteer two men-at-arms sit beside him in the chariot. The war-elephant carries four men—three who shoot arrows from his back—and the driver.

On Elephants and Ants

42. The manner of hunting the elephant is as follows. Round a bare piece of ground is dug a deep ditch about five or six *stadia* in extent, and over this a very narrow bridge is thrown at the place of entrance. Into the enclosure three or four of the tamest female elephants are then driven. The men themselves lie in wait in concealed huts. The wild elephants do not approach this trap by day; but they enter it by night in single file. When all have passed the entrance, the men secretly close it. They then introduce the strongest of the tame combatants, the drivers of which fight with the wild animals, and also subdue them by hunger. When the latter are at length overcome with fatigue, the boldest of the drivers dismount unobserved, and each of them creeps under his own elephant, and from this position creeps under the belly of the wild elephant and ties his legs together. When this has been done they incite the tame elephants to beat those which are tied by the legs till they fall to the ground. Thereupon they bind the wild and tame elephants together by the neck with thongs of raw ox-hide, and to prevent them shaking themselves in order to shake off those who attempt to mount them, they make cuts round their neck, and then put thongs of leather into the incisions, so that animals are forced by pain to submit to their bonds and remain quiet. From the number taken, such as are too old or too young to be serviceable are rejected and the rest are led away to the stables. Here they tie their feet one to another, and their necks to a pillar firmly fixed in the ground and tame them by hunger. Their strength they restore afterwards with green reeds and grass. In the next place they teach them to obey, effecting this by soothing them, some by words and others by song and the music of the drum. Few of them are difficult to be tamed, for they are naturally of a mild and gentle disposition, so as to approximate to rational beings. Some of them have taken up their drivers who have fallen in battle and carried them off in safety from the field. Others have fought in defence of their masters who had sought refuge by creeping between their forelegs, and have thus saved their lives. If in a fit of anger they kill either the man who feeds them or the man who trains them, they are so overpowered with regret that they refuse food, and sometimes die of hunger.

44. This writer says that he saw skins of the ants which dig up gold, and that these resembled the skins of leopards. Megasthenes gives the following account of these ants: Among the Derdai, a great nation of Indians living towards the east and among the mountains, there is a high table-land of about 3000 *stadia* in circumference. Underneath

The India of Megasthenes

61

this are mines of gold which are worked by ants. These animals are not inferior in size to wild foxes, are marvellously fleet, and subsist on what they catch. They dig into the ground in winter, and pile up heaps of earth, as moles do, at the mouths of the mines. The gold-dust requires but little melting. The neighbouring people go after it by stealth with beasts of burden, for if they came openly the ants would fiercely set upon them and pursue those that fled, and kill both them and their beasts should they be overtaken. To elude discovery they lay down in different places pieces of the flesh of wild beasts, and when the ants are variously dispersed, they carry off the gold-dust, and being unacquainted with the method of smelting it, sell it in the state of ore for any price to merchants.

The Heirs of the Mauryas

I

THE SUNGA DYNASTY, KALINGA AND ANDHRA

THE RISE AND FALL of the contending kingdoms that appeared after the collapse of the Maurya Empire can only be traced, and then but dimly, through inscriptions and coins, and this period must, of necessity, consist mainly of names.

Soon after the death of Asoka, the vice-royalty of Taxila in the north-west became independent and Kalinga resumed the position it had lost by the conquest of Asoka. The larger part of Central India and the Gangetic plain were still administered, for about fifty years, by the Maurya successors of Asoka.

In about 185 B.C., Brihadratha, the last Maurya ruler, was murdered by his commander-in-chief, Pushyamitra, who founded the Sunga dynasty. This lasted for a little more than a hundred years. The capital was moved from Pataliputra, west to Malwa. The Sungas reverted to orthodox Brahminism and Brahmin ministers were appointed to the offices of State.

The political geography of India is now as follows. We know of the existence of four States south of the Ganges—Magadha itself, Kasi (or Benares), Kausambi, and Mathura—and three to the east—Videha (north Bihar), Kosala (Oudh), and Panchala. These States occupied most of the Gangetic plain.

The Central Indian kingdoms of Bharhut, Vidisa, and Ujjain formed the bulk of those territories outside the Gangetic plain which were still held by the later Mauryas and their immediate successor, Pushyamitra.

During the reign of the first of the Sunga dynasty, the Andhras of southern India began to play an important role in the politics of the north. Their kingdom adjoined that of Kalinga on the south-east coast. After the death of Asoka, the Andhras expanded across the peninsula, and their inscriptions are still extant in the mountains above Bombay. During the reign of the founder of the Sunga dynasty, the Andhras appear to have captured Ujjain from him.

Under Kharavela, who ascended the throne in 183 B.C., Kalinga, independent once more, expanded to the south to meet the growing power of the

Andhras. In 171 B.C., Kharavela invaded Magadha and captured Pataliputra. The little that is known of this king is contained in a badly damaged seventeen-line inscription in the Mahanadi district, the interpretation of which is in perennial dispute amongst scholars.

The situation in India at the beginning of the first century B.C. saw the Sungas holding the centre of the country and probably the western side of the Gangetic plain, the Andhras occupying the north of the peninsula and Malwa, and Kalinga strongly established on the east coast. South of the Andhras, the peninsula was divided mainly between the Tamil kingdoms—the Cholas in the east, the Keralas in the south-west, and the Pandyas in the south-east. To the north-west remained the Indus plain.

II

THE GREEKS IN THE PUNJAB

On the break-up of the Empire of the Mauryas, invaders once more poured through the passes of the North-west, and again the Punjab became a scene of activity.

In 250 B.C., during the reign of Asoka, Diodotus—Governor of the Greek colony at Bactria (or Balkh)—had set himself up as an independent ruler. Later the Greek kings, who were his successors in Bactria, occupied Gandhara. Their coins, some of which are very fine, were at first purely Greek in character. But later the kings became Indianized and their coinage square, and inscriptions appeared on them in Brahmi or Kharoshthi characters, as well as Greek. It was this bilingual coinage that made it possible to decipher the inscriptions of Asoka.

The greatest of these Indo-Greek kings of the Punjab was Menander (c. 180–160 B.C.), of whom we know, comparatively, a great deal, because his conversion to Buddhism is recorded in a celebrated dialogue, *The Questions of Milinda*. His capital was at Sagala, modern Sialkot.

‘There is, in the country of the Yonakas, a great centre of trade, a city that is called Sagala, situated in a delightful country, well watered and hilly, abounding in parks and gardens and groves and lakes and tanks, a paradise of rivers and mountains and woods. Wise architects have laid it out, and its people know of no oppression, since all their enemies and adversaries have been put down. Brave is its defence, with many and various strong towers and ramparts with superb gates and entrance archways, and with the royal citadel in its midst, white-walled and deeply-moated. Well laid out are its streets, squares, cross-roads, and

market-places. Well displayed are the innumerable sorts of costly merchandise with which its shops are filled. It is richly adorned with hundreds of alms-halls of various kinds, and splendid with thousands of magnificent mansions, which rise aloft like the peaks of the Himalayas. Its streets are filled with elephants, horses, carriages, and foot-passengers, and crowded by men of all sorts and conditions—Brahmins, nobles, artificers, and servants. They resound with cries of welcome to teachers of every creed, and the city is the resort of leading men of each of the different sects.' (*Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. xxv, pp. 2-3.)

Menander made an attempt to conquer what remained of the Empire of Magadha, and after capturing Mathura, threatened Pataliputra, but he was forced to return to the Punjab to attempt to ward off an invasion of the Sakas, or Scythians. Soon after, he was killed in battle.

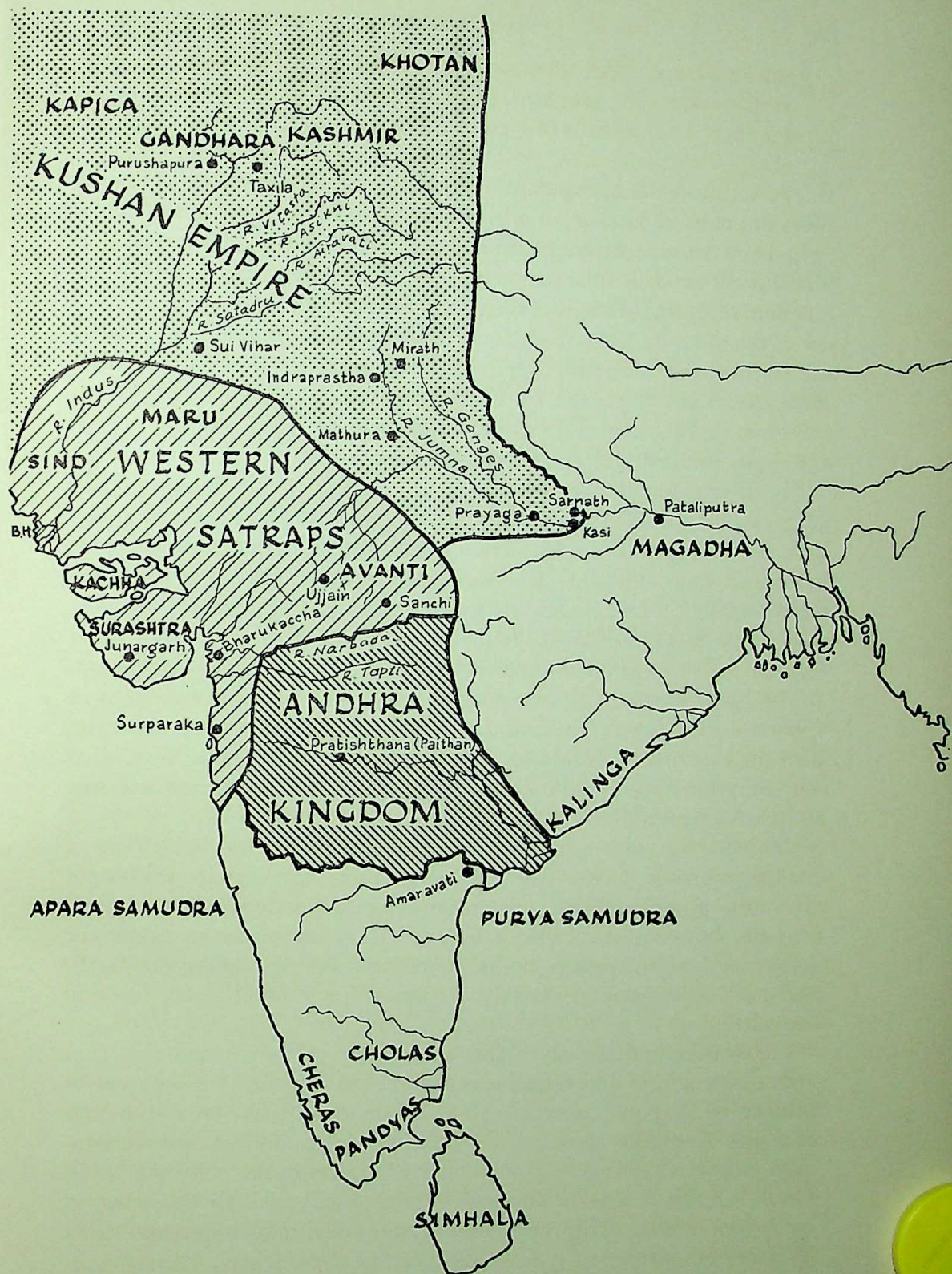
III

THE SAKA INVASION

The Greek rulers of the Punjab were ultimately overcome by the Saka tribes of Central Asia, who occupied the Greek kingdom of Bactria and entered the Punjab by the Bolan pass. They established principalities at Mathura, Taxila, and elsewhere. It seems probable, by their use of Persian titles, that they were feudatories of Mithridates the Great (123-88 B.C.) of Parthia—indeed a Parthian city has been excavated at Sirkap in the Taxila region. One of these Indo-Parthian princes, known to the Greeks as Gondopharnes—a corruption of the Persian *Vindapharna*, or 'Bringer of Victory'—is part of the history of Christianity, if we are to believe the apocryphal *Acts of Thomas*. The Apostle is said to have come to his court to preach the teachings of the Messiah.

The Saka occupation of the Punjab divides into two parts. Maues, the first Saka of whom records survive, occupied Gandhara in 95 B.C. and his successor Azes I, occupied Sialkot about twenty years later. Their rule never extended to the Gangetic plain.

A Saka dynasty also reigned at Ujjain and its kings assumed Hindu names—Rudradaman, etc. Their dominion covered Malwa, Kathiawar, Cutch, and Gujarat, and they intermarried with the Andhras of the Deccan. This Ujjain dynasty survived for several hundred years—it was finally defeated by the Gupta Emperor, Chandragupta II, in A.D. 388. Another Saka dynasty ruled for a short period in Nasik, but was soon conquered by the Andhras.



INDIA IN THE 2ND CENTURY A.D.

THE RISE OF THE KUSHANS

In 174 B.C. a nomadic horde known as the Yueh-chi was driven by the Huns out of its traditional lands in Kansu. Moving westwards, it occupied Saka home territory between the Jaxartes and the Oxus. Later pressures impelled the nomads to move south and, in 126 B.C., they occupied the kingdom of Bactria. Here they ceased to be a nomadic people. In A.D. 48, one of the tribes of the Yueh-chi, the Kushans, under their chief Kadphises, left Bactria and occupied Gandhara, displacing the last Greek king, Hermaeus. Later they extended their control over the petty Greek, Saka, and Parthian kingdoms and founded an Empire which included the Punjab and Sind, northern Gujarat and part of Central India.

The chronology of this dynasty is still uncertain, but it is generally accepted that Kanishka, the only Kushan king about whom we really know much, ascended the throne in A.D. 120—though some scholars suggest he reigned from an earlier date. His capital was at Peshawar and, though the Kushans occupied Indian territory, the reign of Kanishka was no more than a foreign occupation. Like the Mughals, the Kushans looked upon Central Asia as their homeland and hated the heat of the Indian plains.

The Kushans were in communication with Rome. Their conquests in Central Asia, Khotan, Yarkand, and Kashgar had brought them in contact with the Romans, as Kanishka now controlled the trade-route to China. The Emperor coined gold coins in imitation of the Roman *aurei* and sent ambassadors to the Roman emperors.

Kanishka was said to have been converted to Buddhism, which was a creed popular with foreign rulers, although his coinage includes the images of a variety of Indian, Greek, and Persian deities. He undoubtedly patronized the faith, however, and called a Council in an endeavour to resolve the differences that had appeared in the interpretations of the Buddhist scriptures. Elaborate commentaries were drawn up and a Buddhist encyclopaedia compiled.

The Buddhism that evolved after the meeting of the Council was strikingly different from the original conception of its founder. This was due to attempts by Brahmin converts such as Asvaghosha (who was said to have converted Kanishka) to reconcile Hinduism with Buddhism. But the principal change was brought about by the influences of the numerous faiths, Greek, Christian, Zoroastrian, and Central Asian, which were present in north-west India. This new Buddhism—called Mahayana, or 'Great Vehicle', to distinguish it from the pure southern school, Hinayana, or

'Little Vehicle'—elevated the Buddha from a religious teacher into a Saviour God. The theory of incarnation was adopted from Hinduism, and the historical Buddha was held to be the latest of a series of incarnations of the Adi Buddha or Primeval Spirit. The surrounding of the Buddha with a vast orgy of lesser beings, Bodhisattvas, with special paradises presided over by non-incarnate or Spiritual Buddhas, and the appearance of costly temples and elaborate rituals, all combined to produce a popular religion which spread though Central Asia to China and Japan.

V

THE ART OF THE KUSHANS

Kanishka was a patron of literature and art. His capital at Peshawar was enriched with fine buildings and Buddhist monasteries. He also erected a *stupa* over the records of the Buddhist Council held in Kashmir. According to Hsüan-tsang, a later Chinese traveller:

'Kanishka Raja ordered these discourses to be engraved upon sheets of red copper. He enclosed them in a stone receptacle and, having sealed them, he raised over it a *stupa* with the scriptures in the middle.'

Kanishka also wrote one of the earliest Hindu dramas, as well as a long Sanskrit poem on the life of the Buddha.

In the capital was constructed a wooden tower over six hundred feet in height, with an iron pinnacle surmounted by copper-gilt umbrellas. Its sides were adorned with sculptures of the Buddha. This building was considered by travellers to be one of the wonders of the world, and was still standing in the sixth century A.D. In 1908, during excavations, a copper-gilt reliquary was found in the relic-chamber. On the lid were figures of the Buddha and two Bodhisattvas, and an inscription in Kharoshthi which included the information that it was made by 'Agesilaos, overseer of Kanishka's *vihara*' [shrine]. Up until the time of Kanishka, the Buddha had only been represented by various symbols, but now he took on the features of the Greek god Apollo, and the representations created by the Indo-Greek or Gandharan school are taken from Greek models. Sometimes the Buddha is given the form of a prince with moustache and jewels. Corinthian capitals were used in bas-reliefs and Greek gods are adapted to Buddhist mythology. The Gandhara school flourished between A.D. 100 and 300 at a period of close contact with the West.

At the same times an indigenous school of sculpture, carrying on the traditional modes of Sanchi and Bharhut, flourished at Mathura and other

centres. The Buddha-image which was evolved at Mathura revolutionized the artistic history of northern India, and it is this representation, evolved independently of Hellenic prototypes, that proved the inspiration for later sculptors. Its characteristics are most obvious in the great Buddhist shrine at Amaravati on the river Krishna, which at that time lay in the territory of the Andhras.

The length of Kanishka's reign is unknown, but it is said to have come to an end in A.D. 162. It is recorded that he was smothered while he was ill, because of the people's dissatisfaction with his ambitions. A curious legend has come down to us.

'The king is greedy, cruel, and unreasonable: his campaigns and continued conquests have wearied the mass of his servants. He knows not how to be content, but wants to rule over the four quarters. The garrisons are stationed in distant frontiers, and our relatives are far from us. Such being the situation, we must agree among ourselves to get rid of him. After that we may be happy.'

He was succeeded by his son Huvishka, but decay seems to have set in and the last recorded Kushan king, Vasudeva I, who seems to have adopted Hinduism, was apparently deprived of most of his dominions, since the inscriptions concerning his reign are not widespread, and appear mainly at Mathura. His defeat may have been at the hands of the Sassanian Persians who, early in the third century A.D., invaded the Punjab.

Western India and the South

ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION in western India, also, the evidence is incomplete and obscure. The area remained under Saka rule until it was overrun by the Guptas in the fourth century A.D. Their rulers—called *Satraps*, or viceroys—were apparently at one time subjects of the Kushan Empire, but later, on the decline of the central authority, appeared as independent powers. As we have seen, the Sakas came in conflict with the Andhras of the south, and in about A.D. 120 the Saka ruler of Maharashtra—the area to the south of the Narbada river—was overthrown by the Andhras. Soon after, the Saka ruler of Ujjain, Rudradaman I, re-established his dominions south of the river and Ujjain remained the capital of the Sakas in western India until the Gupta conquest.

Rudradaman's main claim to posthumous remembrance lies in the fact that the earliest known Sanskrit inscription of any length was erected by him in A.D. 150 at Junagarh in the Kathiawar peninsula. The rock in which it was cut already bore an inscription of Asoka, and Rudradaman's addition records an exercise in engineering: the rebuilding, twice the original size, of a dam 'constructed by the Vaisya Pushyagupta, the Governor of Chandragupta Maurya, and completed with a canal system by the King Tushaspha under Asoka Maurya'. The inscription continues by mentioning the pride felt by Rudradaman in 'having done the work from his own treasury with great flow of money without levying taxes, special contributions, or forced labour'. There then follow descriptions of his military successes, the extent of his treasures, and his mastery of Sanskrit and his facility in composing poems. The latter was an important gesture towards the Brahmins, indicating that even the descendant of barbarians could assume and cherish the arts of a ruling caste.

To the south, the Andhra power was declining and by the second century A.D. had reverted to its original territories near the east coast. The original dynasty was overthrown by a rebel governor and the name, Andhra, disappeared—only to be revived for the new linguistic province of Telugu-speakers in the present Republic of India. The name of Andhra was replaced by that of the Pallavas, a dynasty which lasted for six centuries and played an important role in the history of the south.

In this period, Hinduism continued its slow expansion helped by the

Indianization of foreign rulers. It is, however, almost impossible to know accurately what was happening because of the absence of reliable dates. Evidence of the progress of Buddhism and Jainism remained in the form of buildings and sculpture, but the available Hindu sources are purely literary.

There are indications, however, that Hinduism was spreading to the south, and it is reasonable to assume that a period of religious upheaval was taking place—encouraged by the conflicting claims of Buddhist, Jain, and Hindu missionaries. It is also certain that Christians were active. It must not be thought that the peoples of South India were barbarous savages. On the contrary, Tamil literature of the period reveals a high-level civilization with considerable luxury for the ruling classes, based upon a well-developed export trade in pepper, pearls, and precious stones. In the first century B.C. trade with Rome was considerable, and Roman coinage was in currency in the kingdoms of South India. Excavations at Arikamedu on the east coast have revealed the existence of cosmopolitan cities, their prosperity based upon trade with the Mediterranean. Trade with Rome was said by Pliny to have involved colossal sums, mainly spent upon luxury goods for the fashionable women of the time.

‘Our ladies glory in having pearls suspended from their fingers, or two or three of them dangling from their ears, delighted even with the rattling of pearls as they knock against each other; and now, at the present day, the poorer classes are even affecting them as people are in the habit of saying that “a pearl worn by a woman in public is as good as a lictor walking before her”. Nay even more than this, they put them on their feet, and that not only on the laces of their sandals but all over the shoes; it is not enough to wear pearls, but they must tread upon them, and walk with them underfoot as well. [Pliny also reported that] I once saw Lollia Paulina, the wife of the Emperor Caius—it was not any public festival or any solemn ceremonial, but only at an ordinary betrothal entertainment—covered with emeralds and pearls, which shone in alternate layers upon her head, in her hair, in her wreaths, in her ears, upon her neck, in her bracelets and on her fingers, and the value of which amounted in all to 40,000,000 sesterces; indeed she was prepared at once to prove the fact by showing the receipts and acquittances. This is the price we pay for our luxuries and our women.’

The Pandyan kings employed Roman soldiers as bodyguards and Tamil literature speaks of ‘dumb Mlecchas [foreigners] with their long coats and armours, and their murderous souls, who might be seen acting as sentries at the palace gates’.

The Hinduization of the south was, however, of a different order from that in the north, and the culture imported by the Brahmins remained no more than a thin veneer over the traditional patterns of society. The mass of the people retained its animistic cults and polyandry and matriarchy, unknown in the north, still survived. The caste system was only accepted in a modified form—with the Brahmin, naturally, and the Sudra, and also the Paryan (or outcaste), which was the old South Indian stock. Kshatriya and Vaisya practically did not exist.

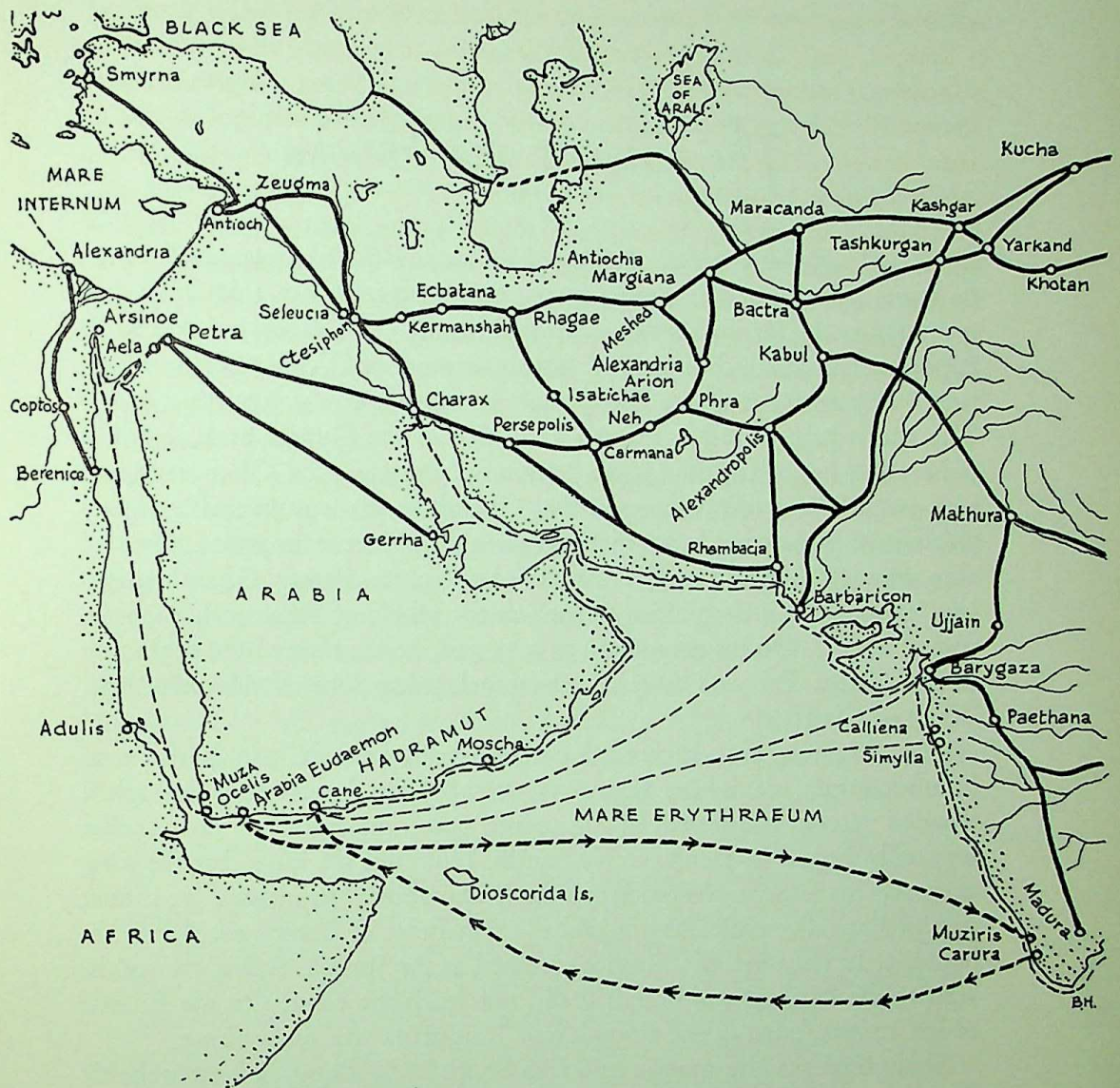
The results of the infiltration of northern ideas and religion will be seen in a later chapter.

The Trade of Ceylon (Taprobane) and the Malabar Coast

The author of the following passages from the *Christian Topography* was an Alexandrian monk who wrote it in order to refute the Ptolemaic system (according to which the earth and the heavens were spherical). The work appeared in the middle of the sixth century A.D. Kosmas, surnamed Indikopleustes—the Indian navigator—had been a merchant before becoming a monk, though it seems doubtful that he ever reached India. Nevertheless, his descriptions are circumstantial and extremely valuable. Of the 'commercial marts' mentioned by Kosmas, Orrhota was probably a town on the western coast of Gujarat, and Sibor (or Chaul) some twenty miles south of Bombay. Of the pepper ports, Mangarouth was Mangalore.

This is a large oceanic island lying in the Indian Sea. Among the Indians it goes by the name of Sielediba, but the Pagans call it Taprobane, wherein is found the stone, hyacinth. It lies farther away than the pepper country. Around it there is a great number of small islands, all of them having fresh water and cocoa-nut trees. They nearly all have deep water close up to them. The great island, the natives allege, has a length of three hundred *gaudia*, and a breadth of as many—that is of nine hundred miles. There are two kings in the island who are at feud with each other. The one possesses the hyacinth, and the other the rest of the island wherein are the port and the emporium of trade. The emporium is one much resorted to by the people in those parts. The island has also a church of Persian Christians who have settled there, and a presbyter who is appointed from Persia, and a deacon and a complete ecclesiastical ritual. The natives and their kings are, however, heathens in religion. In this island they have many temples, and in one situated on an eminence is a single hyacinth as big as a large pine-cone, the colour of fire, and flashing from a distance, especially when the sunbeams play around it—a matchless sight. As its position is central, the island is a great resort of ships from all parts of India, and from Persia and Ethiopia, and in like manner it dispatches many of its own to foreign ports. And from the inner countries, I mean China and other marts in that direction, it receives silks, aloes, clove-wood, sandalwood, and their other products,

and these it again passes on to the outer ports, I mean to Male, where pepper grows and to Kalliana, where copper is produced and sesame wood and materials for dress; for it is also a great mart of trade; and to Sindu also, where musk or castor is got, as well as Androstachus, and to Persia and the Homerite country, and to Adule. Receiving in return the traffic of these marts, and transmitting it to the inner ports, the island exports to each of these at the same time her own products. Sindu is the frontier country of India, for the river Indus, that is, the Phison, which empties itself into the Persian Gulf, separates Persia from India. The following are the most famous commercial marts in India—Sindus, Orrhotha, Kalliana, Sibor, Male, which has five marts that export pepper, Parti, Mangarouth, Salopatana, Nalopatana, Poudopatana. Then out in the ocean at the distance of five days and nights from the mainland lies Sielediba, that is, Taprobane. Then, again, farther away and on the mainland is the mart Marallo, which exports chank-shells, then comes Kaber, which exports alabandenum, then next is the clove country, then China, which produces silk, beyond which there is no other land, for the ocean encircles it on the east.



COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN ANCIENT INDIA AND THE WEST

The Guptas and Harsha

THE COLLAPSE OF THE Kushan Empire introduced a period of which no traces survive, and it is only in the fourth century A.D. that it is again possible to take up the threads of Indian history. The reason for this is the appearance of a Hindu raja who bears the name of Chandragupta, which it will be remembered was also that of the founder of the Maurya dynasty. The succeeding period is referred to as that of the Guptas because of the continuing use of the affix *gupta* (meaning 'protector') by Chandragupta's successors. The evidence suggests that Chandragupta was originally a petty chieftain in Bihar who, by his marriage with a daughter of the great Lichchavi clan, acquired Magadha and its capital at Pataliputra (Patna). Chandragupta later expanded his dominions to include the whole of Bihar and, possibly, part of Bengal. On his coronation in A.D. 320, he announced the beginning of the Gupta Era and struck coins proclaiming himself *Maharajadhiraja*, 'King of Kings'.

Chandragupta was succeeded on his death in A.D. 330 by his son, Samudragupta, of whose reign (330-c. 380) we know only through a detailed record composed by his court poet and inscribed on a pillar originally erected by Asoka at Kausambi. From this we learn that the king extended his father's possessions to the Brahmaputra (to include the greater part of Bengal), while Assam and the remainder of Bengal owed him allegiance. In the west, his Empire stretched to the Jumna, and in the south-west to the Narbada, although it did not reach the coast. On the far side of the Jumna, parts of the Punjab and Rajputana sent him tribute.

Samudragupta also made a raid into South India though it is improbable that he went farther than the northern banks of the Krishna. His reign is sometimes referred to by casual or propagandist historians as a Golden Age—a phrase which has reality only in the number of gold coins (made with gold looted from the south) issued during his rule.

The Guptas are also credited, usually by modern Indian historians, with the 'revival of nationalism', in their capacity as an indigenous dynasty strong against foreign invaders and attempts to conquer and rule. Whatever this phrase may mean, references to the Guptas rarely occur in contemporary Sanskrit literature, and only then with contempt. The main source of praise of the Guptas is the (possibly biased) inscriptions left by the rulers

themselves. Until the discovery of these inscriptions in the nineteenth century the names of the emperors were unknown even by tradition.

Samudragupta was an orthodox Brahmin, but he employed a Buddhist as his advisor. He himself was a musician and poet and is referred to in the inscriptions as *Kaviraja*, 'Poet King'.

In A.D. 380, Samudragupta was succeeded by his son, Chandragupta II, who assumed the name of Vikramaditya—'Sun of Valour'—and extended his kingdom to the Arabian Sea by annexing the last of the Saka territories in Cutch, Kathiawar, Sind, Gujarat, and Konkan. Thus he also acquired the Saka capital Ujjain, a great emporium and centre of trade routes from the ports of the west coast to Sind and the Gangetic plain. The city was also a centre of astronomical studies, ancient Indians reckoning the first degree of longitude from Ujjain.

The reign of Chandragupta II was the apogee of the Gupta dynasty.

Chandragupta II died in A.D. 415 and was succeeded by Kumaragupta (415-55) and Skandagupta (455-c. 480), but the glory of the Guptas was fading—though the actions of Skandagupta were to be of great significance not only in the history of India, but possibly also in the history of the West.

In the north, the nomads of Central Asia were once more on the move. The White Huns, who had settled on the banks of the Oxus in the former kingdom of Bactria, moved southwards through Afghanistan. At first, they were held up by Skandagupta and for a time India was preserved. K.M. Panikkar (in his *Survey of Indian History*, p. 49) maintains that:

'Skandagupta's victory over the Huns has enormous consequences for the world which historians have not realized. At the height of Hun power, by this defeat, its movement was turned west and the continuous pressure on eastern Europe arose in fact from the failure of the Huns to force an entry into India. This may in its results be compared to the failure of the Huns earlier to subdue the Chinese Empire. . . . When almost a century later, the Huns did enter the Punjab, the momentum of their great move across continents had already weakened and what India had in the shape of Toramana and Mihiragula was no more than an insignificant ground swell which had no serious consequences on national history.'

This might well be true if we knew the precise relationship of the White Huns to the Huns proper—which we do not—and if the Huns had not already reached Europe. But it is an interesting thought that an Indian ruler may have diverted an invasion, which was to have such terrible consequences, to the doorstep of Western civilization.

By the year 465, however, a White Hun chief, Toramana, ruled the Punjab

and as far south as Malwa. His son, Mihiragula, had his capital at Sialkot. Buddhist writers label him a monster, who destroyed *stupas* and monasteries and ruled by the sword. The story of his decline in power and final defeat is obscure, but it seems reasonable to suppose that it was primarily because he had been cut off from the remainder of the Hun Empire in Central Asia by the new power of the Turks.

What happened next is equally obscure, but from the evidence of inscriptions of the year 530, discovered in Malwa, it appears that the Huns were defeated by Yasodharman. Of him, little is known except that the last Gupta, Baladitya, was probably a vassal of his, and Buddhist sources actually credit the Gupta king with the defeat of the Huns—presumably for the excellent reason that he was a devout Buddhist.

It is possible that Yasodharman was related to the Vardhana rajas of Thanesar, but whatever the situation his Empire did not last for long, and in the middle of the sixth century the Vardhanas themselves developed into the Empire of Kanauj.

In A.D. 605 Prabhakara Vardhana, raja of Thanesar, died leaving two sons and a daughter. The elder son, Rajya, succeeded to the throne. His sister, Rajyasri, then aged twelve or thirteen, had been married to the ruler of Kanauj, who was killed by the raja of Malwa who also imprisoned Rajyasri. Rajya marched on Kanauj but, at a conference, was murdered. His brother Harsha marched against the Malavas, defeated them and finally discovered his sister—who had fled into the jungles beyond the Jumna—on the point of burning herself on a funeral pyre. Harsha was now asked to ascend the throne and, after some hesitation, accepted. He was at that time sixteen years of age, and had contemplated entering a Buddhist monastery.

After his accession, Harsha expanded the Empire during six years of continuous military operations; he and his people were then assured of thirty years of comparative peace. His Empire stretched from the north of the Ganges to the Sutlej, and included Malwa, Gujarat, and Kathiawar, and his influence extended through feudatories and alliances over an even wider area. Harsha now assumed the title of 'Emperor of the Five Indies', the Punjab, Bengal, Mithila, Kanauj, and Orissa. In the south, his attempt to extend the Empire south of the Narbada was defeated by the Chalukya king, Pulakesin II, and the attempt was not made again.

Harsha died in 646 or 647, leaving no heir. The throne was taken by one of his former ministers who, after attacking a Chinese diplomatic mission, was defeated by forces from Tibet—then a powerful kingdom—and taken as a prisoner to China. At this, the Empire disintegrated and, when next we hear of it, the Empire is divided amongst a number of Rajput clans.

Life in the Gupta and Kanauj Empires

WE KNOW A GREAT DEAL about the Empire of Chandragupta II and that of Harsha from contemporary Chinese travellers—Fa-hsien, who was in India from A.D. 405 to 411, and Hsüan-tsang, who spent the years 630 to 643 in journeying throughout India. For Harsha, we also possess what purports to be a life of the Emperor by the poet Bana. Though it is obviously a court panegyric with the usual exaggerations and deficiencies, the poem is undoubtedly based upon facts.

Fa-hsien was unfortunately mainly preoccupied with the situation of Buddhism, as he travelled from China to copy the scriptures, but occasionally he included descriptions of secular affairs.

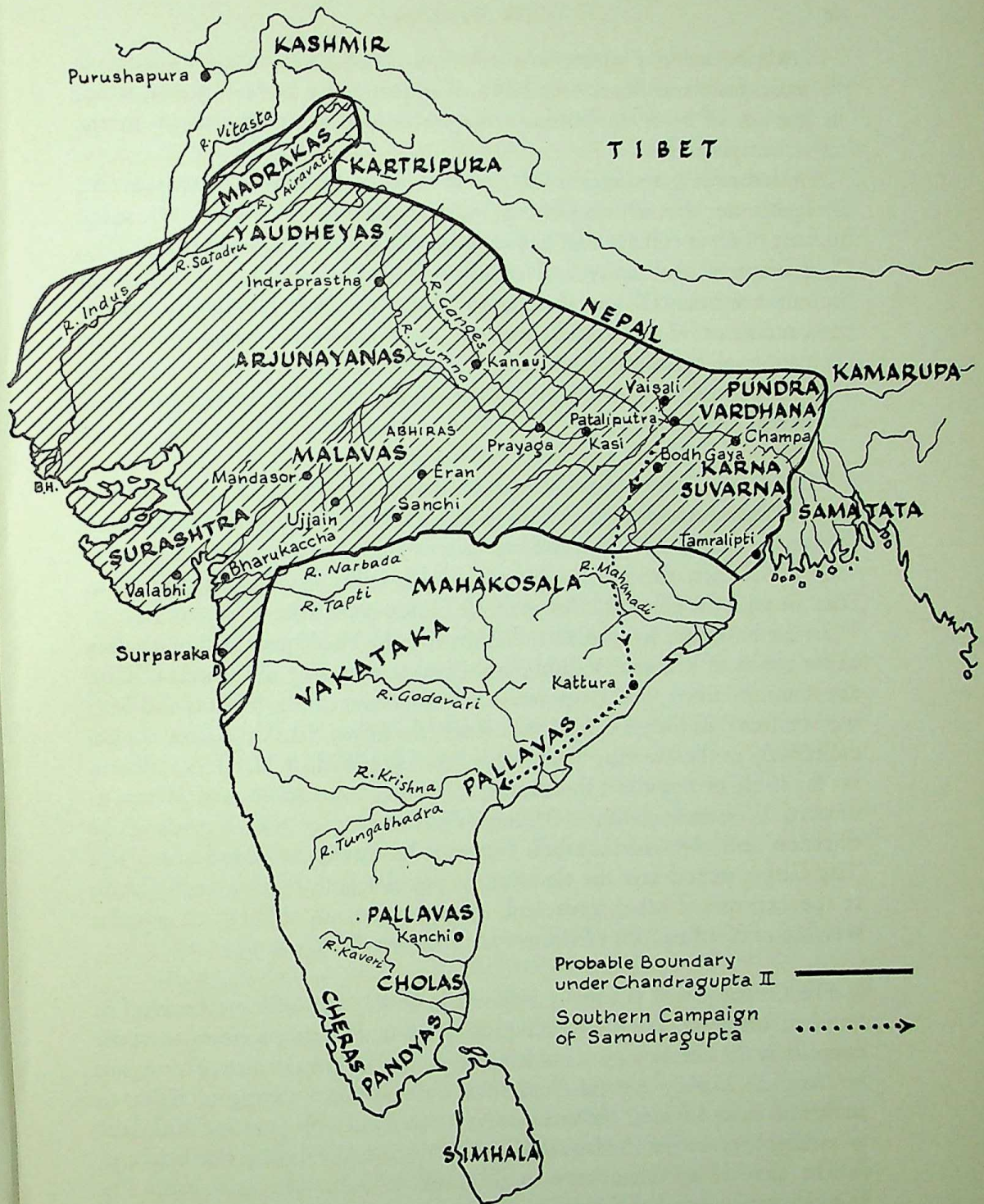
He writes of the charitableness of the Government, of State hospitals, and prosperity:

'The people [in the Middle Kingdom] are numerous and happy. They have not to register their households or attend to any magistrates and their rules. Only those who cultivate the royal land have to pay [a portion of] the grain from it. If they want to go, they go; if they want to stay on, they stay. The king governs without decapitation or [other] corporal punishments. Criminals are simply fined, lightly or heavily, according to the circumstances. Even in cases of repeated attempts at wicked rebellion, they only have their right hands cut off. The king's body-guards and attendants all have salaries. . . . There are no butchers' shops and no dealers in intoxicating drink. In buying and selling commodities they use cowries [shells]. Only Candalas are fishermen and hunters and sell flesh meat. After the Buddha attained to parinirvana, the kings of the various countries and the heads of the Vaisyas built *viharas* for the priests, and endowed them with fields, houses, gardens, and orchards, along with resident population and their cattle, the grants being engraved on plates of metal, so that afterwards they were handed down from king to king without anyone daring to annul them, and they remain to the present time.'

Fa-hsien also describes at some length the monasteries and the hospitality that a traveller meets there:

'All the resident priests, who are allotted cells in the *viharas*, have beds, mats, food, and drink supplied to them; they pass their time in performing acts of mercy, in reciting the scriptures, or in meditation. When a stranger arrives at the monastery, the senior priests escort him to the guest-house, carrying his robes and his alms-bowl for him. They offer him water to wash his feet, and oil for anointing, and prepare a special meal for him. After he has rested awhile they ask him his rank in the priesthood, and according to his rank they assign him to a chamber and bedding. During the month after the rain-rest, the pious collect a united offering for the priesthood; and the priests in their turn hold a great assembly and preach the Law. . . . When the priests have received their dues, the householders and Brahmins present them with all sorts of robes and other necessities; and the priests also make one another offerings. And so, ever since the Lord Buddha passed away from the earth, the rules of conduct of the priesthood have been handed down without intermission.'

The Gupta period is significant for the expansion of agrarian colonies. The strength of previous conquerors was based upon constant raids into other people's territories in search of loot, but a highly organized Empire cannot exist on casual earnings and the strength of the central power under the Guptas must have been based in the first place on ample taxation derived from agriculture. This could only have been made possible by the establishment of new village settlements, and an adequate system of protection for them against predatory raiders. This protection was guaranteed by the dispersal of military elephants throughout the country. The vast number of elephants used by the Guptas as an important part of their army could hardly all be kept at any one place. An elephant consumes some six hundred pounds of green fodder a day, or its equivalent in grain, and any large number would eat an area bare in a very short period of time. A squad, therefore, consisting of one elephant, one chariot, three armoured cavalymen, and five foot-soldiers was developed, and used to police the country areas. In times of war these squads could be called together to form powerful mobile units. The Gupta settlements differed from the old Maurya system which enforced cultivation by the Sudras. Now, the State encouraged private settlement and engaged in waterworks, regulation of trade, the provision of police, and so on. Taxes were much lighter than under the Mauryas. At the same time, as can be seen from the words of Fa-hsien quoted on page 77, officials had not yet acquired feudal rights and were still employees of the central government. Apart from taxation, the Gupta administration was paid for mainly out of the tributes furnished by feudatory States.



THE GUPTA EMPIRE c. A.D. 400

However, this very difference in method resulted in a decisive change in the economic structure, for the result of settlement by private enterprise was the growth of a self-supporting village economy with no interest in the 'movement' of trade.

An interesting indication of the decline of trade-wealth due to the emergence of the self-supporting village community is the very small quantity of silver coinage that has survived. This, too, is very poor in quality. Gold coins of high assay and artistic value were more of a propaganda issue than a financial tool. Under the Mauryas, State monopoly and the consequent use of the middle-man or merchant class, demanded a vast circulation of medium value coins. The breakdown of State enterprise under the Guptas is confirmed by the drastic reduction in the issue and circulation of such coins.

The development of Hinduism under the Guptas would alone have made it one of the most significant periods in Indian history. Jainism and Buddhism, though sponsored and protected by various rulers, had never been popular with the masses, the ascetic realism of these faiths having little appeal in contrast with the colourful deities of the Hindu pantheon.

As we have seen in an earlier chapter, the old Vedic gods had given way to the trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, representing the aspects of God as creator, preserver, and destroyer. The myths concerning Vishnu and Siva were collected in Gupta times into a series of eighteen Sanskrit poems known collectively as the *Puranas*. These have been described by H. G. Rawlinson as 'the Bible of popular Hinduism . . . the nearest parallel to a *Purana* in modern Western literature is Milton's *Paradise Lost*, with its legends of the Creation and of heroic combats between the Powers of Good and Evil'. The Gupta period saw the elevation in popular faith of Siva and Vishnu at the expense of other gods and, in particular, an upsurge of popular worship of Krishna, one of the avatars or aspects of Vishnu.

The Gupta period is usually believed to be the time of a great revival in Sanskrit literature, but it is becoming more and more necessary to revise completely the chronology of ancient India. The former reliance of historians on Sanskrit literary sources—and their own arbitrary dating of them—is more and more suspect. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to assign Kalidasa, who might somewhat inadequately be described as the 'Indian Shakespeare', to the period of Chandragupta II between A.D. 380 and 410. The *Mahabharata* was probably rewritten in its present form just before the Guptas, and despite the weight of historians who assign the *Dharmasastras* to Gupta times, the evidence is unconvincing.

However, it is reasonably sure that Bhartrihari, the author of the *Sringara Sataka*, or 'Century of Love', died in A.D. 651. This is hardly the place for an extended discussion of Sanskrit literature, but there is no doubt that such literature as is written in classical Sanskrit is still a class literature, and the social function of Sanskrit as described in an earlier chapter has been reinforced. Often in the drama of the period both Sanskrit and Prakrit (of one sort or another) appear, the former spoken by kings, noblemen, and Brahmins, the latter by the lower classes. However, the Prakrit used is almost as artificial as the Sanskrit, and is as far away as possible from the popular idiom of the people.

Art and architecture under the Guptas were unfortunate in being subjected to the iconoclastic tempers of Hun and Muslim raiders, but what does survive tends to confirm the descriptions of Chinese travellers. No secular buildings remain, and it is reasonable to assume that sturdy materials such as stone and brick were reserved for religious buildings.

Frescoes from Gupta times are to be found at Ajanta (with earlier ones) and Ellura and Bagh. All these are rock-cut temples. The Buddha-image is now strictly indigenous in style, deriving from the forms of the Mathura school with the addition of the halo of a divine being. Metal-working had reached a very high technical standard: the famous fourth-century Buddha from Sultanganj weighs over a ton and is cast in pure copper by the 'lost wax' method. Pillars were still erected, the most interesting being raised at Delhi in 415 as a memorial to Chandragupta II. It is of solid wrought iron, quite rustless, sixteen inches in diameter and nearly twenty-four feet high. Gupta times have been described as a great transitional period in Indian art, but it is a transition of subject rather than of form—a move away from Buddhist to Hindu themes.

For the reign of Harsha we have the descriptions of the most celebrated of Chinese pilgrims to visit India, Hsüan-tsang, 'The Master of the Law'. His material and the reliability of his facts make his work one of the most important documents we possess on life in India at this time.

'The towns and villages have inner gates; the walls are wide and high; the streets and lanes are tortuous, and the roads winding. The thoroughfares are dirty and the stalls arranged on both sides of the road with appropriate signs. Butchers, fishers, dancers, executioners, scavengers, and so on, have their abodes without the city. In coming and going these persons are bound to keep on the left side of the road till they arrive at their homes. Their houses are surrounded by low walls, and form

The Foundations

the suburbs. The earth being soft and muddy, the walls of the towns are mostly built of brick or tiles. The towers on the walls are constructed of wood or bamboo; the houses have balconies and belvederes, which are made of wood, with a coating of lime or mortar, and covered with tiles. The different buildings have the same form as those in China; rushes, or dry branches, or tiles, or boards are used for covering them. The walls are covered with lime or mud, mixed with cow's dung for purity. At different seasons they scatter flowers about. Such are some of their different customs. The *sangharamas* [monasteries] are constructed with extraordinary skill. A three-storied tower is erected at each of the four angles. The beams and the projecting heads are carved with great skill in different shapes. The doors, windows, and the low walls are painted profusely; the monks' cells are ornamental on the inside and plain on the outside. In the very middle of the building is the hall, high and wide. There are various storied chambers and turrets of different height and shape, without any fixed rule. The doors open towards the east; the royal throne also faces the east. Their clothing is not cut or fashioned; they mostly affect fresh white garments; they esteem little those of mixed colour or ornamented. The men wind their garments round their middle, then gather them under the armpits, and let them fall across the body, hanging to the right.'

Hsüan-tsang gives descriptions of the caste system, manner of dress and habits, and also deals extensively with the state of the people and the administration of government.

'With respect to the ordinary people, although they are naturally light-minded, yet they are upright and honourable. In money matters they are without craft, and in administering justice they are considerate. They dread the retribution of another state of existence, and make light of the things of the present world. They are not deceitful or treacherous in their conduct and are faithful to their oaths and promises, and in their rules of government there is remarkable rectitude, while in their behaviour there is much gentleness and sweetness. With respect to criminals and rebels, these are few in number and only occasionally troublesome. When the laws are broken or the power of the ruler violated, then the matter is clearly sifted and the offenders punished. There is no infliction of corporal punishment; they are simply left to live and die, and are not counted among men. When the rules of morality or justice have been violated, or a man is dishonest or wanting in filial love, his nose or ears are cut off and he is expelled from the city to wander in the jungle till he dies. For other faults besides these, a small fine is exacted in lieu of punishment.

In investigating crimes, the rod is not used to extort proofs of guilt. In questioning the accused, if he answers frankly, his punishment is proportioned accordingly, but if he obstinately denies his fault, in order to probe the truth to the bottom, trial by ordeal is resorted to.

'As the administration of the government is founded on benign principles, the executive is simple. The families are not entered on registers, and the people are not subjected to forced labour. The Crownlands are divided into four parts. The first is for carrying out the affairs of State; the second, for paying the ministers and officers of the Crown; the third, for rewarding men of genius; the fourth, for giving alms to religious communities. In this way, the taxes on the people are light, and the services required of them are moderate. Every one keeps his worldly goods in peace, and all till the soil for their subsistence. Those who cultivate the royal estates pay a sixth part of their produce as tribute. The merchants who engage in commerce travel to and fro in pursuit of their calling. Rivers and toll-bars are opened for travellers on payment of a small sum. When the public works require it, labour is exacted but paid for. The payment is in strict proportion to the work done.'

It is also apparent from the writings of the Chinese pilgrim that as yet there was no serfdom or landlord oppression in the new village system which had been established under the Guptas. This can be deduced from the fact that, after the seasonal cultivation of the land, 'they [the cultivators] rest awhile', and that 'they always barter in their commercial transactions, for they have no gold or silver coins'. Here is confirmation of the decline in the movement of trade and the emergence of the self-supporting village economy.

Universities flourished, and one of the most interesting accounts of Hsüan-tsang's travels is a description of the famous seat of learning at Nalanda in Bihar. Discipline was strict.

'The pursuit of pleasure belongs to the worldly life, the pursuit of knowledge to the religious life. To return to a secular career after taking up religion is considered disgraceful. For breaking the rules of the community the transgressor is publicly rebuked; for a slight fault he is condemned to enforced silence; for a graver fault he is expelled. Those who are thus expelled for life wander about the roads finding no place of refuge; sometimes they resume their former occupation.'

The curriculum included grammar, mechanics, medicine, logic, and metaphysics. Science was well established. Medicine was widely studied

and included 'holding the lancet, in cutting, marking, and piercing with it, in extracting darts, in cleaning wounds, in causing them to dry up, the application of ointments and in the administration of emetics, purges, and oily enemas'. Astronomy was far advanced and the diameter of the world had been calculated. In physics, a certain Brahmagupta (c. 628) had already, anticipating Newton, arrived at a Law of Gravity, and the Vaisesika school at an atomic theory.

We can see that Harsha's Empire was the last great centrally administered Empire—no feudal landlords, no tax-farmers separated the King from his people. Harsha moved around the country continuously.

'If there was any irregularity in the manners of the people of the cities, he went amongst them. Wherever he moved, he dwelt in a ready-made building during his sojourn. During the excessive rains of the three months he would not travel thus. Constantly in his travelling-palace he would provide choice meats for men of all sorts of religions. The Buddhist priests would be perhaps a thousand, the Brahmins five hundred.'

The position of Buddhism under Harsha is an interesting one, for though its monasteries displayed great wealth it had ceased to have *moral* influence upon rulers or people and represented a vested interest of certain elements among the upper classes. The collapse of Buddhism was due to its irrelevance to the emerging economic order of the self-supporting village, for the monasteries were too expensive for the small village unit, and with the decline of a strong central power there was no longer support from powerful kings. At the same time, the new Brahmin, a 'pioneer Brahmin' as Kosambi (in his *Introduction to the Study of Indian History*) so rightly calls him, was out in the new villages making himself indispensable as priest, agricultural advisor, and guardian of rituals that almost gave him the role of witch-doctor. For the new chiefs of the new villages the Brahmin could, for a consideration, discover ancestors mentioned in the sacred texts.

Of the new social and economic order, the Brahmin is the prop and inspiration—Buddhism, concentrated into the luxury of its monasteries, was too degenerate and flabby for the new world of the village.

The Assembly at Kanauj

Hsüan-tsang, the 'Master of the Law', was twenty-six years of age when he arrived in India. He visited 'every place mentioned in Buddhist history or tradition, acquiring the language in which the ancient canonical books were written, studying

The Assembly at Kanauj

85

commentaries, discussing points of difficulty and defending the orthodox faith against disbelievers and schismatics'. He made and took back with him to China an immense collection of manuscripts and images. In A.D. 643, while on a visit to the king of Kamarupa (in the western part of present-day Assam), he received an invitation to visit Harsha, the ruler of Kanauj. Though preparing to leave for China, he made the journey to Kanauj and Prayag (Allahabad), accompanied by the king of Kamarupa, Kumara Raja. Siladitya was one of Harsha's titles. At the time of Hsüan-tsang's visit, the conflict between the old (Hinayana) Buddhism and the new (Mahayana) was at its height (see p. 66). Hsüan-tsang was a believer in the new doctrine. The Sammitiyas were a powerful Hinayana school. The account of this assembly at Kanauj is taken from the *Life of Hsüan-tsang* by Hwui Li, translated into French by Stanislas Julien (*Voyages des Pèlerins Buddhistes*, Paris, 1853).

When the Master of the Law and Kumara Raja arrived near the palace, King Siladitya with twenty of his chief attendants came forth to meet them; and when they had entered and taken their seats, he set choice meats before them, and caused sweet music to be played, and flowers to be strewed at their feet.

Having thus welcomed them, he said to Hsüan-tsang. 'I understand you have composed a treatise in refutation of false doctrines. Where is this treatise?' 'It is here,' replied Hsüan-tsang, and the King took it into his hands and read it. The perusal filled him with joy; and to the officers who were about him he said: 'We know that the feeble light of the glow-worm vanishes before the splendour of the rising sun, that the tap of the workman's hammer is drowned in the crash of thunder; so, in the twinkling of an eye, have the words of the apostles of error been confounded! In defence of their doctrines not one of them, as you know, has dared to open his lips. Devasena, their leader, who claims that in the interpretation of the sacred books he excels all others, and that in the course of his studies he has mastered science in all its branches, has never, while expounding his strange doctrines, lost an opportunity of attacking the principles of the Great Vehicle. Yet no sooner did he hear of the arrival from a foreign country of this illustrious stranger, than he straightway fled, and remained in hiding at Vaisali, under pretext of doing homage to the sacred monuments. From this we know that these false teachers have neither knowledge nor ability.'

The sister of King Siladitya, a lady endowed with rare intelligence, and who excelled in the traditions of the school of the Sammitiyas, was, at this time, seated behind the King. On hearing that Hsüan-tsang had vindicated the sublime principles of the Great Vehicle, and had exposed the narrowness of the Little Vehicle, she, too, was filled with joy, and bestowed on the Master unbounded praise.

King Siladitya then turned to Hsüan-tsang and said: 'Master, your treatise is indeed admirable. I, your disciple, and these learned men who are around you, accept your teaching with faith and submission. But I fear there are yet, in other kingdoms, heretics

of the Little Vehicle, who persist in following the path of darkness. It is my wish therefore, to convoke in your honour a great assembly in the town of Kanyakubja [Kanauj]. Thither I shall summon the Sramanas (those who have entered the religious life), the Brahmins, and the heretics of the five Indies, that you may reveal to them the deep meaning and beauty of the Great Vehicle, that you may refute their calumnies and destroy their boundless pride, and that the light of your virtue may shine forth as the light of day.'

The same day, King Siladitya dispatched messengers to the different kingdoms, summoning all who were skilled in the interpretation of the sacred books to assemble at Kanauj and attend the discourses of the Master of the Law of China. Then at the commencement of the cold season, he proceeded up the river Ganges, taking the Master of the Law with him, and, in the last month of the year, arrived at the place appointed.

Here were seen assembled eighteen kings of Central India, three thousand monks well versed in the Great and Little Vehicles, two thousand Brahmins and naked followers of heretical doctrines, and about a thousand monks from the monastery of Nalanda. All these persons, renowned alike for their learning and for their eloquence and skill in disputation, were full of eagerness to hear the true voice of the law. They had come, some on elephants, and others in palanquins, and each accompanied by a numerous train of followers bearing banners and standards. Like gathering clouds that gradually fill the sky, the multitude increased in numbers, until it covered a space several miles in extent. Indeed, no comparison would be too extravagant to describe the magnitude of this great company.

Orders had previously been issued by the King for the erection of two great pavilions for the accommodation of the disciples, and for the reception of a statue of the Buddha. By the day of his arrival, both these buildings were in readiness. They were spacious and lofty, and each was capable of accommodating a thousand persons. The royal camp was pitched five *li* [over half a mile] to the west of the place of assembly; and here the King had caused a golden statue of the Buddha to be cast.

On this day, an elephant of great size, sumptuously harnessed, and bearing on his back a magnificent throne, was brought, and on the throne the Buddha was placed. The King, arrayed to represent Indra, and carrying a white *chowri* [a ceremonial whisk of yak's tail], walked on the right side of the elephant, and King Kumara, in the character of Brahma, and bearing a jewelled umbrella, walked on the left side; each wore the sacred tiara adorned with flowers and jewelled ribbons. Two other great elephants followed the Buddha; these were laden with baskets of rare flowers which they scattered abroad at each step. The Master of the Law and the chief officers of the court were severally invited to mount elephants and range themselves in order behind the King; and three hundred other elephants were provided for the kings, ministers, and chief disciples of the other kingdoms; these followed in a double line, chanting the praises of the Buddha as they passed along the route.

The procession was formed at dawn, and was conducted from the royal camp to

the palace of assembly by the King. On reaching the gate of the enclosure, orders were given for all to dismount from their elephants, and for the Buddha to be carried within, and enthroned in the building which had been set apart for its reception.

Siladitya having, in company with Hsüan-tsang, done homage to the Buddha, directed that one thousand of the most celebrated and learned of the monks of the eighteen kingdoms should enter the palace of assembly. Five hundred Brahmins, and persons learned in heretical doctrines, were also permitted to enter; as well as the ministers and principal officers of the different kingdoms, to the number of two hundred. All others, whether monks or laymen, who could not be admitted, were directed to dispose themselves in groups without the gate; and when all had been done as the King had said, food was distributed both to those within and those without the enclosure. After this, rich gifts were presented to Hsüan-tsang and the monks: these included a golden dish for the service of the Buddha, a golden cup, seven golden ewers, a monk's staff also of gold, three thousand gold pieces, and three thousand linen vestments of fine quality. Each person received according to his merit. This being done, the King caused a sumptuous seat to be prepared, which he invited the Master of the Law to occupy, requesting him, as president of the solemn conference, to extol the doctrine of the Great Vehicle, and announce the subject for discussion.

Hsüan-tsang then ordered Ming-Hian, a master of the law and monk of the monastery of Nalanda, to announce his prolegomena to the multitude without, and directed that a copy of the same should be displayed on the gate of the enclosure so that all might study it; he also caused to be added to it these words: 'If any man can find here a single error, and can show himself able to refute it, I offer to him my head in acknowledgement thereof.' The writing remained suspended on the gate until the evening, and none dared to speak. This greatly pleased the King, who then adjourned the assembly and withdrew to his royal quarters. The eighteen kings and the monks likewise retired to their several resting-places, as did also the Master of the Law and King Kumara.

On the morrow, the statue was again escorted, with the same pomp, to the palace of assembly, and the conference was renewed. At the end of five days, the heretics of the Little Vehicle, seeing Hsüan-tsang had destroyed the principles of their doctrines, were filled with a deep hatred against him, and sought to take his life. The King, on being informed of their design, issued the following proclamation: 'Since the beginning of the world, truth has been corrupted by false teachers, and mankind has been led astray by specious misrepresentations. If there were no sages of superior merit, how could their false doctrines be exposed? The Master of the Law of China, whose wisdom is unbounded, and whose manner of life excites our admiration and reverence, has come to this kingdom to uproot falsehood, to illumine the sublime Law, and to rescue the blind from the darkness which envelops them. Nevertheless, the chief apostles of error, so far from blushing for shame, have dared to concert odious plots against his life. To tolerate such conduct would be to condone the most atrocious crimes. It is, therefore, decreed, that if any person in this multitude shall dare to attack or injure the Master of the Law,

he shall lose his head; and who so slanders him, his tongue shall be cut out. But all those who, trusting in my justice, desire to dispute in becoming manner, shall enjoy full liberty.' From this moment the conspirators slunk away and disappeared; and all the eighteen days passed without one of them daring to open his lips in the assembly.

The evening before the termination of the conference, the Master of the Law again extolled the Great Vehicle, and praised the high merit of the Buddha. As a result of his discourses, great numbers quitted the path of error and entered upon the right ways abandoning the narrow teaching of the Little Vehicle to embrace the sublime principle, of the Great.

The King's regard for the Master of the Law now became stronger than ever. He ordered ten thousand pieces of gold, thirty thousand pieces of silver, and a hundred vestments of fine linen to be bestowed on him. The eighteen kings likewise offered him rich gifts. Hsüan-tsang, however, would accept none of these things. Then King Siladitya requested him to mount an elephant which had been splendidly caparisoned for the occasion, giving directions, at the same time, to the most eminent of his nobles to form a procession and conduct the great Master to and fro amongst the people, and to make proclamation that he had expounded and firmly established the principles of the true doctrines, and that none had been able to confute his arguments. In the western kingdoms it is customary to render such honour to the victor in a discussion.

The Master of the Law would have declined this special honour; but the King said: 'This custom has come down to us from the earliest times, and we are forbidden to disregard it.' Then holding Hsüan-tsang by his sacred robe, he cried in a loud voice: 'The Master of the Law of China has triumphantly vindicated the principles of the Great Vehicle, and has uprooted the errors of the sectaries. For eighteen days none has dared to challenge his words. Let his victory be proclaimed on every side.' Then the whole multitude rejoiced, and the Master was acclaimed with titles of honour. The disciples of the Great Vehicle called him Mahayana Deva, the Deva of the Great Vehicle, and those of the Little Vehicle called him Moksha Deva, the Deva of deliverance. Then burning incense, and scattering flowers before him, they did him reverence, and departed. . . .

After the assembly had dispersed, the King caused the golden statue of the Buddha, which he had made, to be placed in the monastery of Nalanda, where it was to remain, together with a large quantity of money and of vestments, in charge of the monks.

India on the Eve of the Muslim Invasions

I

THE DECCAN

WE HAVE ALREADY mentioned, somewhat casually, the history of the Deccan as it relates to events in northern India, but in order to counteract the misleading impression that the principal activity of Indian history lies in the north, it is not only instructive but necessary to examine in some detail the kingdoms and culture of the Deccan.

The earliest rulers in the Deccan of whom we have satisfactory information are the Andhras, who apparently occupied an area between the estuaries of the Godavari and Krishna rivers. At the time of the Chandragupta, the founder of the Maurya State, the Andhras were already a powerful military State and waged frequent wars against their neighbours, although later they probably became vassals of Asoka. On the collapse of the Maurya Empire, the Andhras fought against the Kalingas and the Saka rulers of Ujjain and Orissa. The greatest of the Andhra kings, Gautamiputra Sri Satakarni (second century A.D.), ruled an Empire stretching from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal.

Buddhism had been introduced into the Deccan at the time of Asoka and, though the Andhran kings were orthodox Hindus, they patronized Buddhism with gifts for monasteries and grants of land. Communications were good—inscriptions in caves at Nasik record donors from northern India, while merchants from Nasik are mentioned on a *stupa* near Allahabad. In fact, the cave-monasteries that have been discovered are along known trade-routes.

The cave-inscriptions are a valuable source of information on life under the Andhra kings. The country was divided into three provinces which enjoyed a large measure of independence. Trade was in the hands of guilds. There was a regular coinage and probably a well-organized movement of trade, as banking was well established and gave fixed rates of interest on loans.

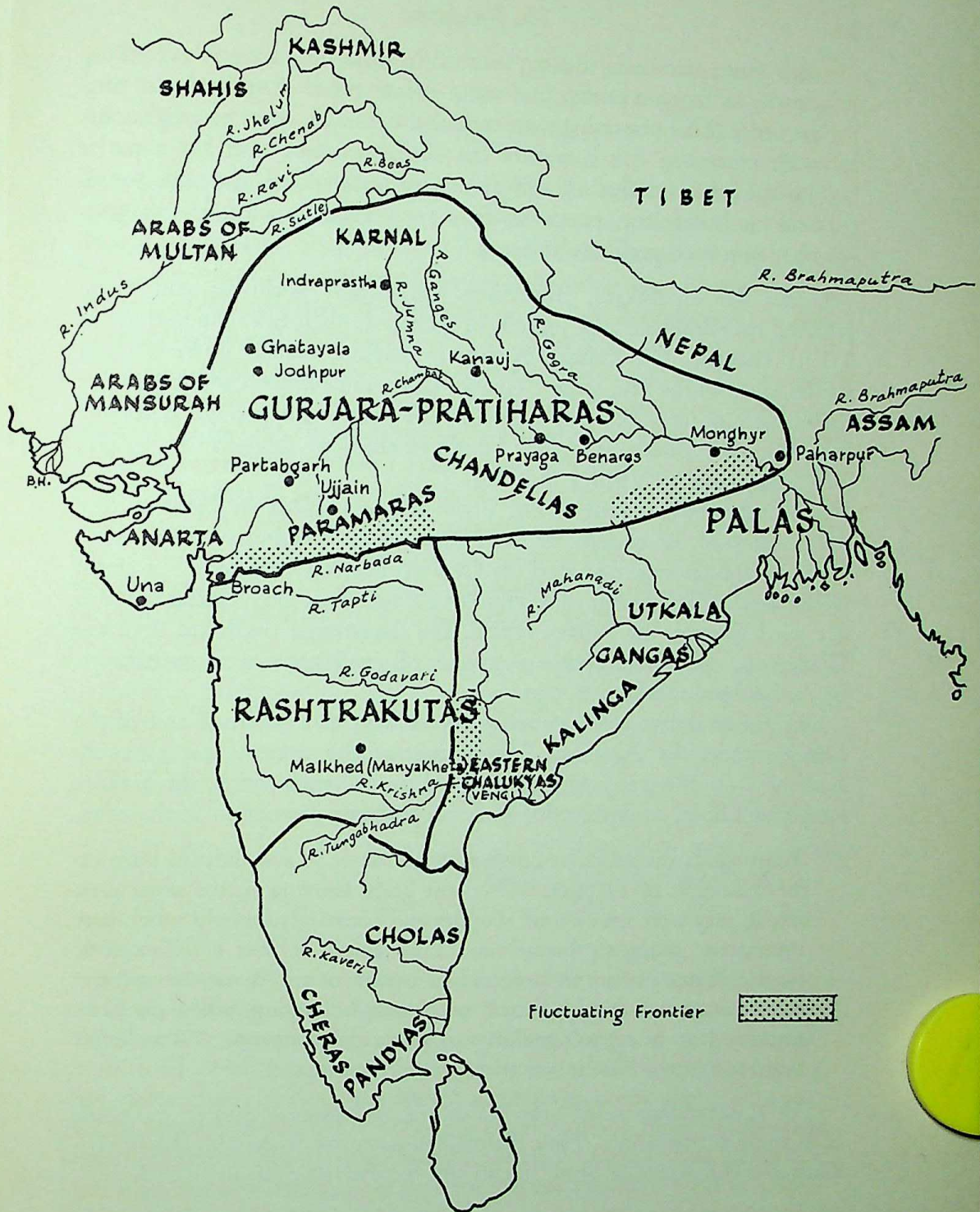
The causes of the collapse of the Andhras in the third century A.D. are still obscure, but a number of smaller dynasties succeeded them until they,

in turn, were absorbed by the expanding power of the Chalukyas. One of these successor States was of considerable importance as a pipe-line, carrying the art and culture of northern India to the south. This was the Vakataka kingdom of Berar, which lay between the Gupta Empire and the south. One of the kings married a daughter of Chandragupta II.

In the middle of the sixth century A.D. emerges the Chalukya dynasty which claimed to be of Rajput origin. It is more likely that they were part of the Gurjara horde of Central Asia. However, they established their first capital at Vatapi (Badami) in Bijapur. The most powerful king of the early period of Chalukya supremacy was Pulakesin II (A.D. 608-42?) who, as we have seen, frustrated the attempts of Harsha to cross the Narbada. This period was followed by the extension of Chalukya territory to include practically the whole of the former territory of the Andhras. Pulakesin's fame was known abroad, and ambassadors and gifts were exchanged between him and the Persian king Khusru II in A.D. 625.

That indefatigable traveller Hsüan-tsang visited Pulakesin at Nasik in A.D. 641-2 and describes the king as 'of the race of the Kshatriyas; his ideas are large and profound, and he extends widely his sympathy and benefactions. His subjects serve him with perfect self-devotion', and gave a description of the northern capital (Nasik) and the kingdom.

'The capital borders on the west on a great river. It is about thirty *li* round. The soil is rich and fertile; it is regularly cultivated and very productive. The climate is hot; the disposition of the people is honest and simple; they are tall of stature and of a stern vindictive character. To their benefactors they are grateful; to their enemies relentless. If they are insulted, they will risk their lives to avenge themselves. If they are asked to help one in distress, they will forget themselves in their haste to render assistance. If they are going to seek revenge, they first give their enemy warning; then, each being armed, they attack one another with lances. When one turns to flee, the other pursues him; but they do not kill a man who submits. If a general loses a battle, they do not inflict punishment, but present him with a woman's clothes, and so he is driven back to seek death for himself. The country provides for a band of champions to the number of several hundred. Each time they are about to engage in conflict they intoxicate themselves with wine, and then one man with lance in hand will meet ten thousand and challenge them to fight. If one of these champions meets a man and kills him, the laws of the country do not punish him. Every time they go forth, they beat drums before them. Moreover they inebriate many hundred heads of elephants, and taking them out to fight, they themselves first drink



INDIA c. A.D. 900

their wine, and then, rushing forward in mass, they trample everything down, so that no enemy can stand before them. The king, in consequence of his possessing these men and elephants, treats his neighbours with contempt. He is one of the Kshatriya caste and his name is Pu-lo-ki-she [Pulakesin]. His plans and undertakings are widespread, and his beneficent actions are felt over a great distance. His subjects obey him with perfect submission.'

Under the Chalukyas, Buddhism was already declining and being replaced by Hinduism and Jainism of which we shall have more to say in a later chapter. The Ganga dynasty in Mysore erected immense Jain statues, one—of the Jain saint Gomata—being some fifty-six feet high. The Elephanta cave near Bombay is also of this period and, though borrowed from Buddhist models, is entirely Hindu in character. Magnificent temples were also erected to Vishnu and Siva.

Soon after Hsüan-tsang's visit, Pulakesin was killed in battle during the invasion of the country by the Pallava king Narasimhavarman, who, with unusual severity, destroyed the Chalukya capital of Vatapi. For about twelve years, anarchy reigned, until in 674 Pulakesin's son, Vikramaditya I, occupied Kanchi, the Pallava capital. But the struggle continued until the Chalukyas, now divided into a number of small states, were overthrown by the Rashtrakutas in A.D. 757.

The Rashtrakutas were probably nobles who had governed part of the Deccan under the Andhras. The greatest of this dynasty was probably Krishna I (c. 760–800) who constructed a great rock-shrine, the Kailasa temple at Ellura, as is recorded in a copper-plate inscription of the time.

'Krishnaraja caused to be constructed a temple of a wonderful form on the mountain of Elapura. When the gods, moving in the aerial cars, saw it, they were struck with wonder and constantly thought much over the matter, saying to themselves: "This temple of Siva is self-existent, for such beauty is not to be found in a work of art." Even the architect who constructed it was struck with wonder, saying, when his heart misgave him as regards making another similar attempt, "Wonderful! I did not know how it was that I could construct it!"'

The Rashtrakutas ruled from sea to sea, and from Malwa in the north to Kanchi in the south. They maintained extensive trade with the Persian Gulf and the Arabs of Sind, but in 973 the dynasty came to an end.

II

SOUTHERN INDIA

Hsüan-tsang visited the Pandyan kingdom in A.D. 640 and found its climate hot and its people quick-tempered. Buddhism here was also in decline but there were hundreds of Jain and Hindu temples. Soon after the Chinese pilgrim had left the kingdom, the king was converted to the worship of Siva by his wife, a Chola princess, and persecuted the Jains, destroying some eight thousand of them at Madura alone.

Information on the Pandyan kings between the seventh and the tenth centuries is still lacking, and what we know is mainly concerned with constant battles with the Pallavas, the Keralas, and Ceylon. The Pandyan kingdom reached its greatest power in the thirteenth century under Jata-varman Sundara (1215-71). Marco Polo, on his return from China in 1293, passed through the Coromandel and Malabar coasts and left a description of the kingdoms he visited. He tells us that the Pandyan country was prosperous but the people somewhat negligent about clothes, and he was particularly impressed by the pearl fisheries.

'You must know that in all this kingdom of Malabar there is never a tailor to cut a coat or stitch it, seeing that everybody goes naked at all times of the year . . . ! For decency only they wear a scrap of cloth; and so it is with men and women, with rich and poor, aye, and with the king, Sundara-Pandya himself. . . . It is a fact that the king goes as bare as the rest, only around his loins he has a piece of fine cloth, and round his neck he has a necklace entirely of precious stones—rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and the like, so that this collar is of great value. . . . What this king wears, between gold and gems and pearls, is worth more than a city's ransom.'

We have seen that there were continuous wars between the Pallavas and the Chalukyas. The Pallavas, about whose origins historians still differ, were at the zenith of their power between A.D. 600 and 750, with their capital at Kanchi (Conjeevaram). However, a revived Chalukya dynasty, around 740, captured Kanchi with considerable loot, and after this episode Pallava power declined until about the year 900 the Cholas annexed the kingdom. The Pallavas hold an important place in the history of Hindu art, particularly with the famous sculptures at Mamallapuram.

The Chola country has also been described by Hsüan-tsang, although before it arrived at its greatness. The Chinese traveller certainly did not think very highly of it.

'It is deserted and wild, a succession of marshes and jungle. The population is very small, and the troops of brigands go through the country openly. The climate is hot, the manners of the people dissolute and cruel. The disposition of the men is naturally fierce: they are attached to heretical teaching. The *sangharamas* [monasteries] are ruined and dirty as well as the priests. There are some tens of Deva [Hindu] temples, and many Nirgrantha [Jain] heretics.'

The apogee of Chola rule was reached during the reigns of Rajaraja the Great (985-1018) and his successors. Under them, the Chola Empire defeated the Keralas, the Pandyas, the eastern Chalukyas, Kalinga on the eastern coast and, because Rajaraja established a powerful navy, the island of Ceylon.

On the threshold of the Islamic conquests the whole of Peninsular India—for the first time in its history, as far as we know—was under the domination of one dynasty.

III

NORTHERN INDIA

A very different situation existed in the north. On the collapse of the Empire of Harsha, its parts broke off into the usual self-seeking anarchy of petty kings and chieftains.

By the eighth century the political situation acquired definition. Kashmir emerged as one of the elements in the struggle for power. In the seventh century the king of Kashmir had occupied considerable areas of the Punjab and owed tributary allegiance to the Chinese Empire, which then was the paramount power over the States to the north of India. In 740, Kashmir won a decisive battle for Kanauj, which had itself just concluded a successful invasion of Bengal.

The situation in Bengal at that time was anarchic, but in 750 Gopala, the first of the Pala dynasty, was chosen as king. His successor, Dharmapala, expanded his possessions westward and placed a nominee on the throne of Kanauj, but further expansion was stopped by the Rashtrakutas. The ninth king of the Pala dynasty, Mahipala (the suffix *-pala*, like *-gupta*, means 'protector'), who ruled from 978 to 1030 was defeated by the Cholas.

The Pala dynasty lasted for four and a half centuries and its kings made Bengal a centre of Buddhism, learning, and artistic activity.

Under Dharmapala and his successor, conflict arose at Kanauj with the growing power of the Pratiharas of Rajputana. Little is known of the details,

but by 830 Kanauj was the most important power in the north. The Pratiharas were a Rajput clan. The origins of the Rajputs are obscure. As they claimed descent from the Sun, the Moon, and the gods of the fire-pits on Mount Abu, there is little satisfactory information from indigenous sources, but it is probable that they emerged after the invasions from Central Asia of the Gujars and the Huns. Whatever the truth, they expanded over Gujarat, Rajputana and Hindustan. As we have seen, the Chalukyas also claimed to be Rajputs.

Two consecutive Rajput kings, Mihira Bhoja I and Mahendrapala I, ruled with force from Kanauj between 840 and 910. In 916 Kanauj fell to the Rashtrakutas. By the time the Turks entered India towards the end of the tenth century, the north was divided amongst petty kings.

In the Indus Valley, the advance guard of Islam was already established, though it was left to the Turks to be the sword of an expanding and dynamic faith.

Hsüan-tsang, that inevitable source for the period, had passed through a large kingdom, ruled by a Sudra king, in Sind and Baluchistan, but by 650 the Arabs had occupied Baluchistan and sixty years later overthrew a Brahmin successor-dynasty in Sind. From 712, Sind and portions of the Punjab were part of the Caliphate of Baghdad, though later the provinces became independent principalities owing a theoretical subservience to the Caliph.

As the tenth century drew to its close, no central authority remained in northern India to resist invasion with such unity as the Mauryas had presented to Seleucus I thirteen hundred years before.

IV

RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC LIFE

The religious situation in India before the Muslim invasion was complex, but though there existed various sects—Jains and Buddhists, Christians, Parsees, and Jews and, amongst the wilder tribes, Animists—Hinduism had crystallized into a form which gave it the strength to resist the perils of a dynamic Islam.

Buddhism had, for a variety of reasons, declined, and many of its ideas and forms had been absorbed into Hinduism. The Hinduization of the simple teaching of Gautama was reflected in the elevation of the Buddha into a divine being surrounded, in sculptural representations, by the gods of the Hindu pantheon. The Buddha later came to be shown as an incarnation of Vishnu.

The decline of Buddhism was also subject to a change in fashionable taste and political necessity. Under powerful rulers, the 'sweetness and light' elements in Buddhism could be used as a propaganda weapon. For the rising upper classes with doubtful, or no, caste antecedents, Buddhism was a convenient waiting-room for the moment of absorption into the higher levels of the caste-structure.

There was also a movement away from Buddhism among religious thinkers, though they were not averse to using Buddhist ideas. Sankara, a monist philosopher, who evolved a practical way of life, was sometimes charged with being a concealed Buddhist.

The most important concept of this period was that of *bhakti*, the devotion to a god as a personal saviour, worthy of trust and capable of the act of grace. This doctrine was extremely important and we will learn more of its development in later chapters. Ramanuja (1175-1250) who was responsible for the development, defined it in this way:

'There is first the belief in a Primal Being who is indeed infinite, but infinite in qualities of goodness; secondly, the doctrine that in his love for His creatures the Supreme becomes incarnate in diverse blessed forms to save men from sin and sorrow, and lead them to union with Him; and thirdly, the teaching that the Supreme may be reached by any suppliant, who worships him in perfect self-forgetting love.'

This view was by no means popularly held, as Hinduism at its lowest levels offered no more than the magical powers, the spells, and the secret knowledge of the village Brahmin. Concepts such as *bhakti* were for the upper classes.

At the same time as the formulation of a doctrine of love and grace, moral decadence is apparent amongst the upper classes. *Sati* (suttee), or widow-burning, which had re-emerged under the Guptas, was spreading among them (it had never been practised by the lower levels of society). Literature became more and more artificial and futile, sculpture, erotic. The *devadasi* (temple prostitute) emerged, and a vast body of obscene literature, written by people of the highest social position, was in wide circulation. Yet taboos, on food and wine for example, became stringent—until one might describe the apparent rigidity of the social system as a vast 'front organization' obscuring a soft core of degeneracy.

Economically, the self-supporting village system continued, but the breakdown of strong, centralized empires had permitted the growth of feudalism. The local landowner, paying taxes to the administration, squeezed what he could from his dependants. At the same time, with the expansion of overseas trade, various landowners took over profitable local

monopolies in order to supply the demands of the caravan traders who moved about the country purchasing commodities for export. This land-owning class emerged because the use of force was needed to produce surpluses for trade and revenue; it formed a parallel with the Brahmins who had originally been given the land—though in many circumstances Brahmins adapted themselves to changing needs and became arms-bearers themselves.

Because of the revival of the movement of trade, coinage became a necessity, for barter cannot cover all the needs of a merchant-economy. This period, then, shows an upsurge in real wealth, for as barter ceases to be the primary mode of exchange, it is possible to 'hoard' wealth in the form of convertible tokens, i.e. coinage.

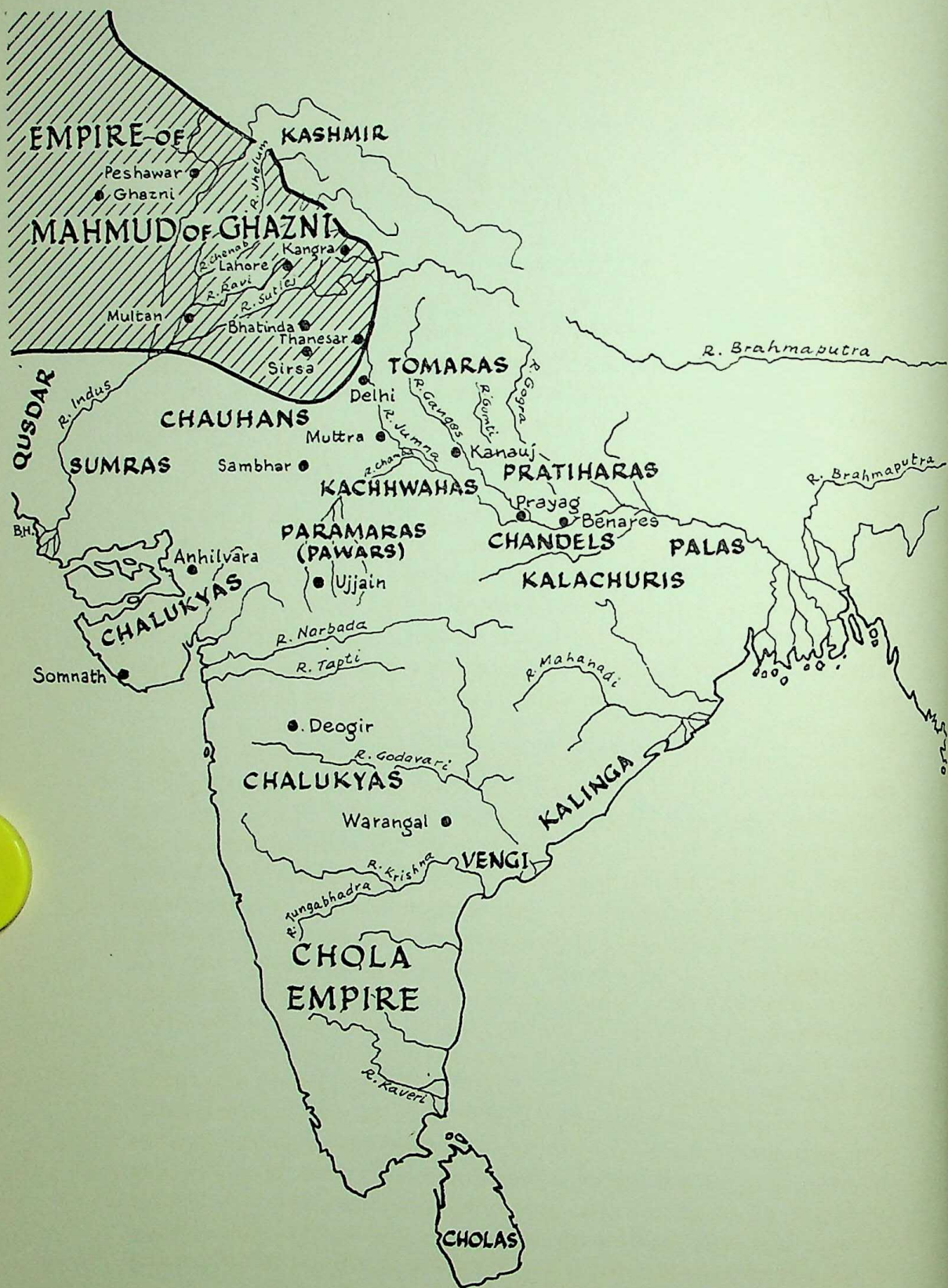
The administration was based upon the king, aided by a civil service mainly recruited from the Brahmin caste. The standing army was frequently large but not outstandingly efficient. The State itself was an instrument of dynastic and oligarchic ambition, an *estate* rather than a patriotic entity. This prevented any sense of unity against possible invasion. The Hindus, safe in the fortress of their beliefs, could not conceive that their superior system could be overthrown by anyone else. As Albiruni, a contemporary, described them, they 'believe that there is no country but theirs, no nation like theirs, no kings like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs. . . .' With inefficient military power, this was hardly the gospel of successful resistance.

PRINCIPAL DATES

B.C.	
c. 1500	Tentative date of the fall of the Indus Valley cities
558-530	Cyrus the Great, King of Persia
c. 560-c. 480	Gautama Buddha
c. 540	Bimbisara of Magadha
c. 540-c. 468	Mahavira
c. 490	Ajatasatru of Magadha
c. 413	Nanda of Magadha
326-325	Indian expedition of Alexander the Great
322	Chandragupta Maurya
c. 305	Seleucus I Nicator advances to the Indus
c. 302	Megasthenes at Pataliputra
298	Death or retirement of Chandragupta
273-232	Reign of Asoka
c. 185	Last Maurya king murdered by his commander-in-chief, Pushyamitra, founder of the Sunga dynasty
c. 180-160	Menander, king of the Punjab
171	Kharavela invades Magadha
A.D.	
48	Kadphises I Kushan occupies Gandhara
c. 120-c. 160	Reign of Kanishka Kushan
c. 150	Earliest known Sanskrit inscription erected by the Saka king, Rudradaman I, at Junagarh
320-c. 330	Reign of Chandragupta I
c. 330-c. 380	Reign of Samudragupta
c. 380-415	Reign of Chandragupta II
405-411	Travels of Fa-hsien in the Gupta Empire
530	Mihiragula defeated by Yasodharman
606-c. 647	Reign of Harsha
608-642	Reign of Pulakesin II Chalukya
630-643	Travels of Hsüan-tsang in India
710-712	Arabs dominate Sind
750	Accession of Gopala, first Pala king of Bengal
760-973	Rashtrakuta dynasty
840-910	Mihira Bhoja and Mahendrapala I at Kanauj
985-1018	Rajaraja the Great, Chola

Part Two

THE ISLAMIC CONQUESTS



INDIA AT THE DEATH OF MAHMUD OF GHAZNI 1030

The Coming of the Turks

ONCE AGAIN, AFGHANISTAN and the passes become the pivot of Indian history. The possession of this area by a strong power has always—throughout the entire period covered by this book—been a critical factor. All invasions up to that of the Europeans were nurtured in this powerhouse of Central Asia. Centuries later, under British hegemony, two wars were fought to keep Afghanistan weak and divided, so that the encroaching strength of the Tsarist Empire could not use it as a jumping-off place for an invasion of northern India. Now, however, at the beginning of the Islamic contact, a powerful dynasty had established itself in the tenth century at Ghazni. In 977, a great conqueror came to the throne in the person of Sabuktigin, who marched south against a Hindu raja, Jaipal, who ruled a large area of the Punjab as well as part of Afghanistan. Jaipal was defeated in 986 at Bhatinda, near modern Patiala, and in 991 a confederation of chiefs under his leadership was again defeated. Sabuktigin established his frontier on the Indus, and in 997 he was succeeded by his son Mahmud.

It must not be thought that these first invaders were barbarians, whatever the ferocity with which they acted. On the contrary, they were culturally a sophisticated people, patrons of literature and science. Their religion was monotheistic—any belief in the division of the one god was heretical, and any representation of that god was an unforgivable sin. Originally, the Islamic form of government was a sort of commonwealth, and restrictions were few. In their conquests, the conquered were offered the choice of conversion or death, but by the time of Mahmud a significant change had taken place in their attitude to defeated peoples of a different religion. Previously, exceptions had been made for Jews and Christians, as 'people of the Book'—i.e. the Old Testament—and if these accepted Muslim rule they were permitted to remain within their own faith, after the payment of a special tax. This relief had, after the conquest of Sind, also been extended to Hindus. This attitude was used by the earliest Islamic conquerors in order to preserve the existing social and economic structure as far as was reasonable and conducive to continuous and orderly administration. But this sensible tolerance was only the *aftermath* of invasion. During the actual battles, Hindu shrines were destroyed and looted while, as meat-eaters, the invaders

slaughtered vast numbers of cattle—acts indescribably offensive to Hindu religious sensibility.

The Muslims introduced the use of paper, gunpowder, porcelain, and tea. One of the most significant results of Mahmud's raids was the movement south of Muslim traders and the establishment of what were virtually fifth columns in areas to which invasion only came at a later date.

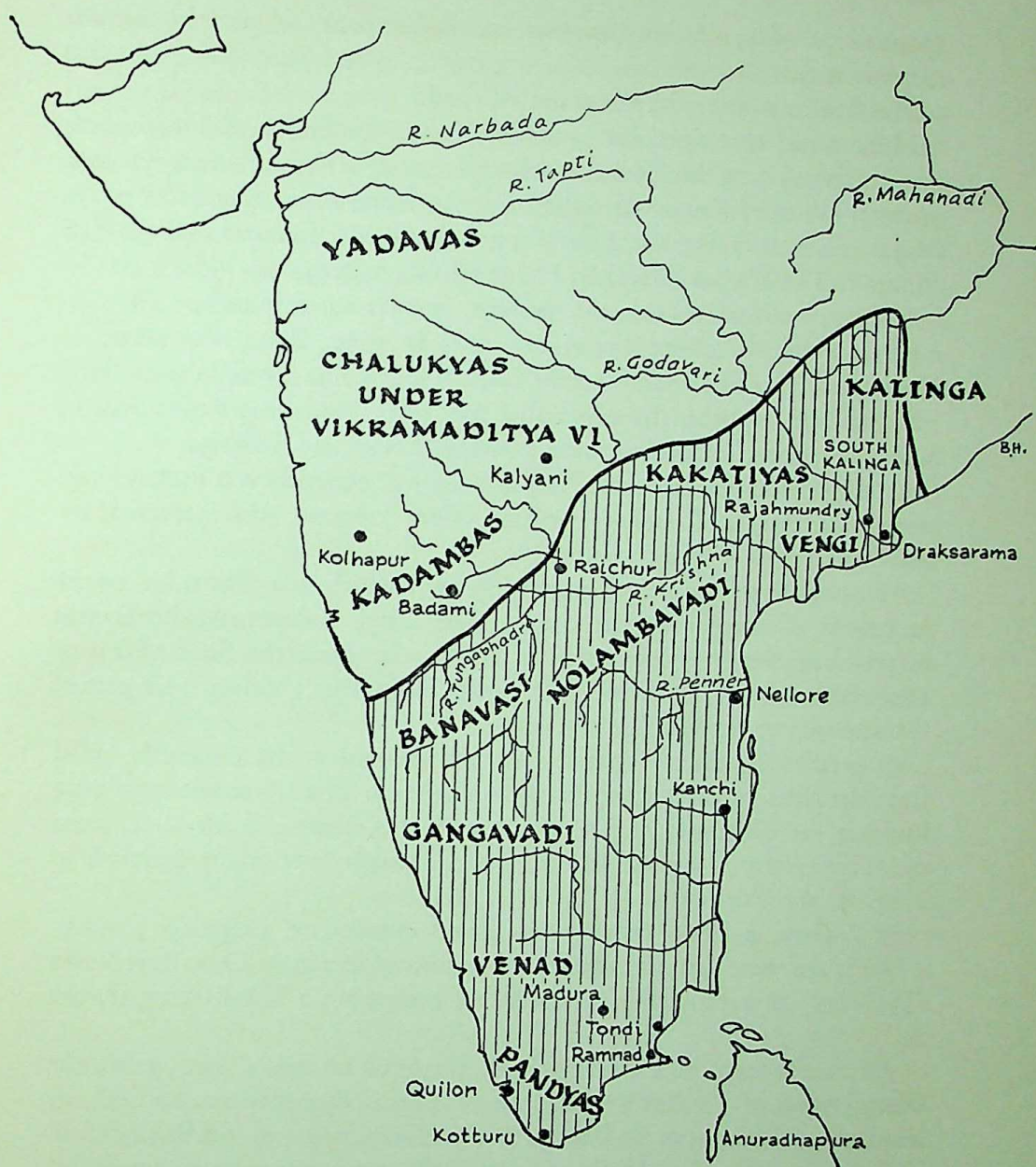
The character of Mahmud is obscured by the conflicting traditions of Hindu and Muslim propaganda. Certainly, he was a crusader for his faith and a conqueror of considerable severity. He was mainly concerned with expanding his kingdom in Persia and Turkestan, and his invasions of India were, basically, only raids. Between 1001 and 1026, he conquered and annexed the Punjab, and raided as far as Kanauj in the west and Kathiawar in the south.

In 1018, Kanauj, and the holy city of Mathura, were captured with immense spoils—and such a vast number of prisoners that Indian slaves were for long commonplace throughout Turkestan and Persia. Six years later, Mahmud sacked the great temple of Somnath in Kathiawar, destroyed the image, and removed the gates to Ghazni. This act earned him the title of 'the image-breaker', and Mahmud has remained a synonym for Muslim iconoclasm.

Mahmud died in 1030, at the age of sixty-two. He was by no means a barbarian. He enriched his capital of Ghazni with mosques and libraries, and enjoyed the conversation of poets and scholars. Among these were Firdausi, author of the great Persian epic the *Shah Nama* ('Book of Kings'), and Abu Rihan Muhammad, known as Albiruni, 'the Foreigner'. The latter's *Chronology of Ancient Nations* is an encyclopaedia of Indian religion, philosophy, and science.

With the death of Mahmud, India was free from invasion for nearly fifty years. The Rajput clans who had been destroyed by Mahmud were replaced by new ones, chief among whom were the Gaharwars of Kanauj, the Tomaras of Delhi, and the Chauhans of Ajmir. Many romantic legends grew up around the Rajput renaissance but it was not to last, for, at Ghazni, the weak successors of Mahmud had been driven out of their capital by the Afghans of Ghur.

Muhammad of Ghur, who now ruled, continued to raid India—for the Ghaznavid rump was now settled in Lahore. Muhammad's first attempt led, however, to his defeat, for he found himself confronted by an immense army commanded by Prithviraj Chauhan. Muhammad was wounded in the fight and his army fled from the field of battle. In the following year (1192), Muhammad returned for his revenge and defeated Prithviraj at Tarain. 'For miles the stricken field was bestrewn with castaway flags and



THE CHOLA EMPIRE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 12TH CENTURY

spears and shields, and heaped bows, jewelled swords and plumed casques, exquisitely chiselled and damascened gauntlets, breast-plates and gaily-dyed scarves, intermingled with the countless dead.'

Muhammad continued his progress. Ajmir, Gwalior, and Delhi—only recently founded by the Tomaras, fell to his armies. Kanauj was taken, and its ruler, Jaichand Gaharwar, killed. The remnants of his clan fled into the desert, where they became known as Rahtors and founded the State of Jodhpur. The Rajput revival had been firmly crushed.

In 1194, the Muslims moved eastwards. Benares was captured by Muhammad's general Kutub-ud-din Aibak and, in 1199, Bihar was taken by Muhammad ibn Bhaktyar. Here the General found that the city was nothing but a college, and the 'shaven-headed Brahmins' were almost all killed. In actual fact, these 'Brahmins' were Buddhist priests and Bhaktyar's act was the end of Buddhism in India. The university of Nalanda was destroyed, its library, shrines, and images broken. Those monks who survived the holocaust fled to Tibet.

The next step was the conquest of Bengal, which was then ruled by the successors of the Palas, the Senas. The king, Lakshmana Sena, was surprised at dinner in his capital of Nuddea by Bhaktyar. Soon after A.D. 1200 the whole of northern India except Rajputana, Malwa, and part of Gujarat was under Muslim rule.

In present-day Bundelkhand, a dynasty known as the Chandels, ruled from the tenth to the end of the twelfth century. The Chandels were great builders—as evidenced at Khajuraho and elsewhere—and irrigators, some of whose reservoirs are still in use. The Chandels were finally defeated, in 1203, by the Turks.

In Malwa, a Pawa dynasty ruled and constructed irrigation projects. Their kings were famous as poets and patrons of literature. One, Raja Bhoja (1018-60), is traditionally the model of everything a Hindu king should be.

As can be seen, northern India still presented no united face against the second wave of Muslim invaders. Its kings and dynasties rose and fell, its armies were chivalrous and brave but undisciplined and old-fashioned in their tactics. They placed their reliance on the cumbersome, unmanœuvrable strength of elephants, which were nothing against well-armed and efficiently officered cavalry and archers. Secure in their sense of innate superiority, the Hindus died because the Muslims' own sense of superiority was backed by a fighting creed, a disciplined army, and a crusading purpose.

In the south, Chola power had suffered a major defeat in 1052 at the hands of the later Chalukyas, who had taken over the Rashtrakuta territories in the north-west of the peninsula, but who in turn were defeated by the

The Coming of the Turks

105

Cholas ten years later. To the south, new dynasties were gathering strength. On the decline of the Cholas in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Hoysalas—in what is now Mysore—the Yadavas in the north, and the Kakatiyas in the east, divided the Chalukya possessions between them. The latter two were soon conquered by Muslim invaders but a branch of the Hoysalas were to found the Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar, which was destined to be, between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, the only great Hindu Empire in the whole of India.

The Kingdom of Delhi

IN THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER, the defeat of the forces of Muhammad of Ghur by Prithviraj has already been mentioned, as also has the defeat of Prithviraj in 1192. This battle, which took place at Tarain in Kurukshetra, was one of the decisive battles of Indian history. Prithviraj's behaviour became the ideal of Rajput chivalry and his wife's final speech to her husband, a rallying cry in later years. 'Oh Sun of the Chauhans, none has drunk so deeply both of glory and of pleasure as thou. Life is an old garment; what matters if we throw it off? To die well is life immortal.' After the battle, the Queen and her attendants burned themselves to death on a funeral pyre.

Muhammad of Ghur was assassinated on the banks of the Indus in 1206. A description of the murder is given by Juvaini, the historian of Chingiz Khan, in his *History of the World-Conqueror*.

'His pavilion was erected on the bank of the river so that half of it extended over the water; and no care was taken to guard that side against *fida'is* [agents of the Ismailis]. Suddenly, in the middle of the day at the time of the Sultan's siesta two or three Indians emerged from the water as unexpectedly as fire and threw themselves into the pavilion, where he was lying forgetful of the waiting and watching of foes and oblivious to the perversity of Fate. They turned the bright day into black night for the army by destroying the king, and spoiled for him the flavour of the food of life. When our doom awaits us, of what avail is the might of man? And when fortune wanes of what assistance are quantities of elephants? All his gear and accoutrement, all this white and black profited him nothing.'

It is not clear who were the actual assassins, but they were probably members of a heretical Ismaili sect and not, as might be supposed, agents of an Indian ruler.

Muhammad's conquests passed to his generals, the principal of whom, a former slave Kutub-ud-din Aibak, was accepted as overlord by the Muslim governors and assumed the title of Sultan of Delhi.

Kutub-ud-din died in a polo accident in 1210 and was succeeded by Iltutmish, his son-in-law. Under his rule, Delhi was embellished with a great mosque and the magnificent tower of the Kutub Minar. During his

The Kingdom of Delhi

107

reign, India was threatened by Mongol hordes under Chingiz Khan, but they turned at Peshawar and swept westwards to the banks of the Dnieper. Ilutmish re-established Muslim power in Bengal, Multan, and Rajputana, but he had barely succeeded when he died in 1236, nominating as his successor his daughter Raziyya—who was assassinated with her Abyssinian husband four years later. After a period of anarchy and disorder, authority was re-established under Nasir-ud-din Mahmud (1246-66) by his slave-general, Balban, who afterwards succeeded Mahmud on the throne. Balban ruled with great severity, flaying rebels alive or having them trampled to death by elephants. When he finally established his authority he was prevented from further expansion by renewed Mongol activity in the north. A rebellion in Bengal was suppressed and Balban created a new kingdom with his younger son on the throne.

His elder son, Muhammad, was killed in a skirmish with the Mongols in 1285, and Balban died two years later, overcome with sorrow at his loss. His grandson, Kaikubal (1287-90), who was eighteen at the time of his accession, spent his time in continuous debauchery and, after becoming paralysed, was murdered by a successful rebel.

The throne was then occupied by the usurper, Jalal-ud-din (1290-6), whose reign was undistinguished, and he was succeeded by his nephew and son-in-law Ala-ud-din. This king was the most powerful of the Turkish rulers, and the conqueror of Southern India. In 1294, while still a provincial governor under Jalal-ud-din, he moved south and raided the Yadava capital at Deogir, returning with enormous loot which he refused to disgorge to the king's treasury. A meeting was arranged on the banks of the Ganges, where the king was treacherously killed. Ala-ud-din marched on Delhi and assumed power. In the beginning his situation was fraught with danger. His murder of his uncle had shocked even the insensitive Turks. The chiefs were in revolt and the Mongols were active on his western frontier.

Ala-ud-din's actions would have done credit to the author of the *Arthashastra*. The Muslim historian Barani has left us a description.

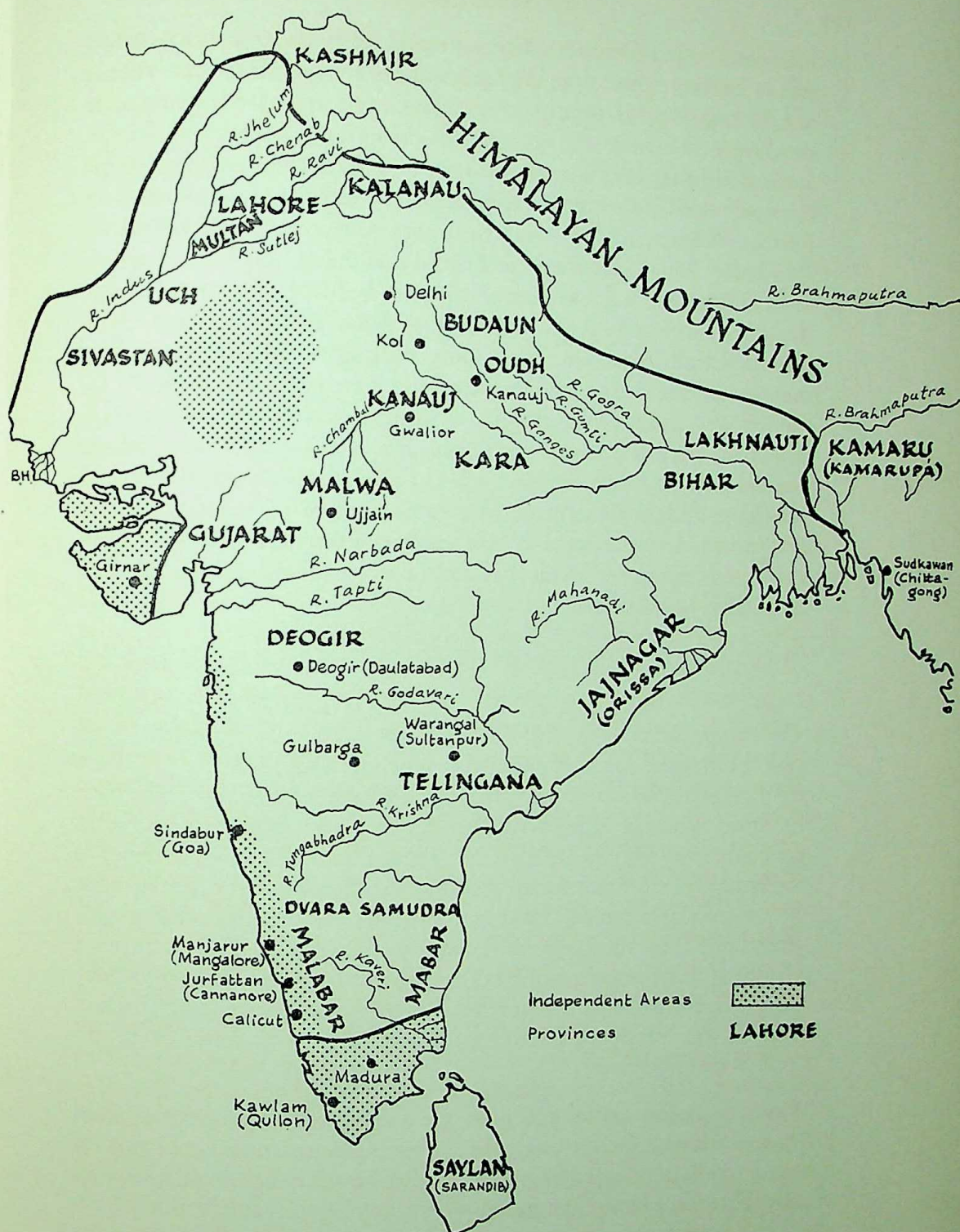
'The Sultan next directed his attention to the means of preventing rebellion, and first he took steps for seizing upon property. Whenever a village was held by proprietary right, in free gift, or as a religious endowment, it was to be brought back into the exchequer by a stroke of the pen. The people were pressed and amerced and money was exacted from them on every kind of pretext. All pensions, grants of land, and endowments were appropriated. The people became so absorbed in trying to keep themselves alive that rebellion was never mentioned. Next, he set up so minute a system of espionage that nothing done, good or

bad, was hidden from him. No one could stir without his knowledge, and whatever happened in the houses of nobles, grandees, and officials was brought by his spies for his information, and their reports were acted upon. To such a length did this prying go that nobles dared not speak aloud even in thousand-columned palaces, but had to communicate by signs. In their own houses, night and day, dread of the spies made them tremble. What went on in the bazaars was all reported and controlled.

'Thirdly, he forbade wine, beer, and intoxicating drugs to be used or sold; dicing, too, was prohibited. Vintners and beer-sellers were turned out of the city, and the heavy taxes which had been levied from them were abolished. All the china and glass vessels of the Sultan's banqueting-room were broken and thrown outside the gate of Badaun, where they formed a mound. Jars and casks of wine were emptied out there till they made mire as if it were the season of the rains. The Sultan himself entirely gave up wine parties. Self-respecting people at once followed his example; but the ne'er-do-wells went on making wine and spirits and hid the leather bottles in loads of hay or firewood and by various such tricks smuggled it into the city. Inspectors and gatekeepers and spies diligently sought to seize the contraband and the smugglers; and when seized the wine was given to the elephants, and the importers and sellers and drinkers flogged and given short terms of imprisonment. So many were they, however, that holes had to be dug for their incarceration outside the great thoroughfare of the Badaun gate, and many of the wine-bibbers died from the rigour of their confinement and others were taken out half-dead and were long in recovering their health. The terror of these holes deterred many from drinking. Those who could not give it up had to journey ten or twelve leagues to get a drink, for at half that distance, four or five leagues from Delhi, wine could not be publicly sold or drunk. The prevention of drinking proving very difficult, the Sultan enacted that people might distil and drink privately in their own homes, if drinking parties were not held and the liquor not sold. After the prohibition of drinking, conspiracies diminished.

'Also, the Sultan commanded noblemen and great folk not to visit each other's houses, or give feasts, or hold assemblies; not to marry without royal consent, and to admit no strangers to their hospitality. Through fear of spies, the nobles kept quiet, gave no parties, and held little intercommunication. If they went to the caravanserais, they could not lay their heads together or sit down cosily and tell their troubles. So no disturbance or conspiracy arose.

'The Hindu was to be so reduced as to be unable to keep a horse, wear fine clothes, or enjoy any of life's luxuries. No Hindu could hold up his



THE EMPIRE OF THE TUGHLUKS IN 1335

head, and in their houses no sign of gold or silver or any superfluity was to be seen. These things, which nourish insubordination, were not to be found. Men looked upon revenue officers as worse than fever; to be a clerk was a crime; no man would give his daughter to such. Ala-ud-din was a king who had no acquaintance with learning and never associated with the learned. He considered that polity and government were one thing, and law another. "I am an unlettered man," he said, "but I have seen a great deal. Be assured that the Hindus will never become submissive and obedient till they are reduced to poverty. I have therefore given orders that just enough shall be left them of corn, milk, and curds, from year to year, but that they must not accumulate hoards and property." Next day he said, "Although I have not studied the science or the Book, I am a Muslim of the Muslims. To prevent rebellion, in which many perish, I issue such ordinances as I consider to be for the good of the State and the benefit of the people. Men are heedless, disregarding, and disobedient to my commands, so I have to be severe to bring them to obedience. I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful; but whatever I think is for the good of the State or fits the emergency, that I decree."

The possibility of corruption amongst revenue-officials was also legislated for.

'Collectors, clerks, and other officers employed in revenue matters, who took bribes and acted dishonestly, were all dismissed. . . . [These regulations] were so strictly carried out that the various types of village headmen were not able to ride on horseback, to find weapons, or to get cloth, or to indulge in betel. . . . Driven by destitution, the wives of the headmen went and served for hire in the houses of the Mussulmans . . . every single amount against the names [of revenue officers] was ascertained from the books of the village accountants. There was not a chance of a single coin being taken dishonestly or as a bribe from any Hindu or Mussulman. The revenue officers were so coerced and checked that for five hundred or a thousand *tankas* they were imprisoned and kept in chains for years.'

These regulations only applied to the area directly administered from Delhi and served a double purpose of imposing strict security measures on potential rebels, and supplying the necessary revenue for the maintenance of a large standing army. It must also be remembered that 'Hindus' meant chiefs and landowners, and not ordinary cultivators.

A strict system of price control was enforced.

The Kingdom of Delhi

III

'Ala-ud-din took such pains to keep down the prices of necessities of life that his exertions have found a record in famous histories. To the merchants he gave wealth, and placed before them goods in abundance, and gold without measure. He showed them every kingly favour, and fixed on them regular salaries. With this went drastic punishment for short weight; flesh was cut off from the vendors' haunches to make up the shortages. Poor, ignorant boys were sent by the espionage service to make purchases; should any be short, quick, effective retribution followed. . . . Nay, they gave such good weight that the purchaser often got somewhat in excess.'

Serious revolts did take place but these were mainly confined to Muslim nobles and army commanders.

The administration of Ala-ud-din operated so efficiently that internal security was assured and he could turn his attention to the expansion of the kingdom. Between 1306 and 1311, three campaigns against the south were mounted, as will be seen in the following chapter. Malwa and Gujarat were also annexed.

In January 1316, Ala-ud-din died—probably murdered by Kafur, a slave who had commanded the southern invasions—and a period of disorder followed. Kafur was murdered a month later, Ala-ud-din's son succeeded and four years later was murdered by a favourite who then set himself on the throne. In 1320 or 1321, Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluk became king. His reign was unusual for its justice and honesty. Ala-ud-din's elaborate system, which had already partially collapsed, was lightened and revised. In 1325, Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluk and his favourite son were killed, while returning from an expedition against Bengal, by the collapse of a building. This seems to have been arranged by another son, Muhammad, who then succeeded him.

Of Muhammad Tughluk (1325-51) we have a view by the great traveller, Ibn Batuta.

'Muhammad above all men delights most in giving presents and shedding blood. At his door is seen always some pauper on the way to wealth or some corpse that has been executed. Stories are rife among the people of his generosity and courage, and of his cruelty and severity. Yet he is the most humble of men and one who shows the greatest equity; the rites of religion are observed at his court; he is most strict about prayer and the punishment of those who neglect it. But his characteristic is generosity. Countries at some distance from India, such as the Yemen, Khorassan, Persia, are full of anecdotes of this prince, and their inhabitants know him very well; and they are not ignorant,

especially, of his beneficence towards foreigners, whom he prefers to Indians and favours and honours them greatly. He will not have them called "foreigners", for he thinks the name must wound the heart and trouble the mind of such.

'One of the grandees of India alleged that the Sultan had executed his brother without just cause, and cited him before the *Kazi*. The Sultan went on foot to the court, without arms, saluted, made obeisance, and stood before the *Kazi*, whom he had notified beforehand not to rise at his entry or budge from his seat of audience. The judge gave his decision that the sovereign was bound to satisfy the plaintiff for the blood of the brother, and the decision was duly obeyed.

'The Sultan was severe upon such as omitted the congregational prayers, and chastised them heavily. For this sin he executed in one day nine people, one of whom was a singer. He sent spies into the markets to punish those who were found there during prayer times, and even the men who held the horses of the servants at the gate of the hall of audience if they missed prayers. He compelled the people to master the ordinances for ablutions, prayers, and the principles of Islam. They were examined on these matters, and if ignorant they were punished. The folk studied these things at court and in the markets, and wrote them out. The Sultan was rigorous in the observance of the canonical law. He abolished in 1340-1 the dues which weighed heavily on commerce, and limited taxation to the legal alms and the tenth. Every Monday and Thursday he would sit in person, with assessors, to investigate acts of oppression. No one was hindered from bringing his plea before the king. When there was such a famine in India that a *maund* [80 lb.] of corn cost six dinars, he ordered six months' food to be distributed to all the inhabitants of Delhi from the Crown stores. Each person great or small, free or slave, was to have a pound and a half Morocco weight [about 2 lb.] a day.'

Tughluk might be generously described as an eccentric. He indulged in necromancy and the provision of a token coinage stamped upon leather—an interesting precursor of the bank-note which, however, led to a serious depletion in the Treasury. Tughluk moved his capital from Delhi to Daulatabad (Deogiri), because of a serious famine and the more central position of the new site. As the inhabitants grumbled about the change, Delhi was compulsorily depopulated. The new capital, however, was climatically unsuitable and there was a return to Delhi, but as there were no supplies of food a temporary capital had to be erected at Kanauj.

In the military sphere, a great army sent against the Persians broke up for

want of pay. The Mongols who still threatened Delhi were bought off. During Tughluk's reign, Bengal and Southern India south of the Narbada became independent once again.

Tughluk died of fever in Lower Sind in 1351 on an expedition against a local rebellion. The army placed on the throne, as his successor, his cousin Firuz.

The reign of Firuz (1352-88) has certain interesting features which did not die with him. After some rather pitiful attempts to reconquer territories lost by Tughluk, and because the Mongols were also quiet, his reign represents a short interval of peace. Those aspects of Firuz's reign which make it different from his predecessors' were mainly due to a converted Brahmin who took the name of Khan Jahan.

Most of the taxes and of the ferocious economic system of Ala-ud-din were abandoned, and assisted by a series of good harvests agriculture prospered. One of the new innovations was the granting of land to office bearers and soldiers; this is the beginning of the movement towards creating a class based upon the land in direct relationship with Hindu cultivators.

Firuz assembled a vast number of personal slaves.

'The Sultan Firuz was very diligent in providing slaves, and he carried his care so far as to command his fief-holders and officers to capture slaves whenever they were at war, and to pick out the best for the service of the court. (These presents were valued like elephants, and deductions made for them, which no ruler had done before.) . . . Those chiefs who brought many slaves received the highest favour. . . . The numbers brought every year exceed description. . . . When they were in excess, the Sultan sent them to Multan, Dipalpur, Hisar Firozah, Samana, Gujarat, and all the other feudal dependencies. In all cases provision was made for their support in a liberal manner. In some places they were provided for in the army, and villages were granted to them; those who were placed in cities had ample allowances varying from 100 down to 10 *tankas*, which was the lowest amount. These allowances were paid in full, without any deduction, at the Treasury, every six, four, or three months. . . . Some [slaves] were placed under tradesmen and were taught mechanical arts, so that about 12,000 slaves became artisans of various kinds. . . . The institution [of slavery] took root in the very centre of the land, and the Sultan looked upon its due regulation as one of his incumbent duties. . . . There was no occupation in which the slaves of Firuz Shah were not employed. None of the Sultan's predecessors had ever collected so many slaves. The late Sultan Ala-ud-din had drawn together about 50,000 slaves, but after him no Sultan had directed his

attention to raising a body of them until Sultan Firuz adopted the practice. . . . When the slaves under the great feudal chieftains became too numerous, some of them, by order of the Sultan, were given in the charge of *amirs* and *maliks*, that they might learn the duties of their respective employments. . . . But after his [Firuz Shah's] death the heads of these favoured servants of his were cut off without mercy, and made into heaps in front of the *darbar*.

This unusual development was an attempt by Firuz to protect himself against the intrigues and attacks of rebel generals and nobles, and at the same time make himself financially independent in case of interference with the delivery of revenue to the central treasury. The strategic position of these personal slaves must have been important enough, since they were disposed of so immediately after the death of their master.

Six successors occupied the throne in the ten years following the death of Firuz and, when the kingdom was at its weakest, the Mongols, once more on the move, attacked Delhi.

The Empire of Chingiz Khan had by the fourteenth century dissolved into a number of independent kingdoms whose rulers had been converted to Islam. In 1369, Timur (Tamerlane) was crowned by the banks of the Oxus, and began to carve himself an Empire. After Central Asia, he turned his sword towards India and in 1398 crossed the passes. By December of that year, Delhi had fallen. 'The city was utterly ruined; the inhabitants who were left, died, and for two months not a bird moved a wing in Delhi.' About 100,000 of the inhabitants were taken into slavery.

Timur marched as far as the Ganges, but troubles in western Asia forced him to return. Six years later he died on the way to China. Timur left no mark except the ruins of the Turkish kingdoms of Delhi.

The Conquest of the South

I

THE BAHMANI KINGDOM

WEALTH IS INEVITABLY A SPUR to invasion, and rumours of vast quantities of gold and precious stones in the temples and palaces of the Deccan and the south were the incentives for the Muslim drive against the successors of the Chola Empire.

These successors, as has already been mentioned, were the Yadavas, the Kakatiyas, the Hoysalas, and the Pandyas. In 1306, a raid on Deogiri—for enforced collection of overdue revenue—was successful, and the Yadava ruler became a vassal of the king of Delhi. The slave-general Kafur also, in 1308, repeated his success at Deogiri in an attack on the Kakatiya capital at Warangal.

At this stage, rumours of wealth became so enticing that in 1310 Kafur moved south, defeated the Hoysalas, occupied Madura—which had been deserted—and reached the coast opposite Ceylon. Vast quantities of loot were carried off. Apart from this gold-letting, the economy remained untouched, for the spoils of the campaign were unproductive wealth. The administration of the country was unchanged and the rulers were not deposed.

However, the tribute due to the central authority in Delhi soon fell into arrears and in 1315 the Yadava king was removed from his throne; in 1323 the same fate struck the Kakatiyas at Warangal. About this time, a Muslim governor ruled at Madura.

Changes were imminent and in 1334 the Governor of Madura founded a line of independent sultans, and by 1347 Deogiri was ruled by a Muslim dynasty. This dynasty took the name of Bahmani after its first king, Ala-ud-din Bahmani. During his reign (1347–58) he extended his rule to the sea in the west and Warangal in the east. After this, the capital was moved from Deogiri to Gulbarga, farther south.

At this stage, Southern India was divided between the Muslim power—the Bahmani kingdom of the Deccan, with its southern frontier on the Krishna—and the new Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar ('City of Victory'),

established on the river Tungabhadra, a tributary of the Krishna. The lands in between changed hands many times.

Vijayanagar had been established as a Hoysala capital about 1336 and, on the original line becoming extinct, a new dynasty appeared which was known by the name of the city. The Tamil kingdoms were virtually at an end. The Cholas had disappeared, the Pandyas survived into the seventeenth century as vassals, as did the Keralas.

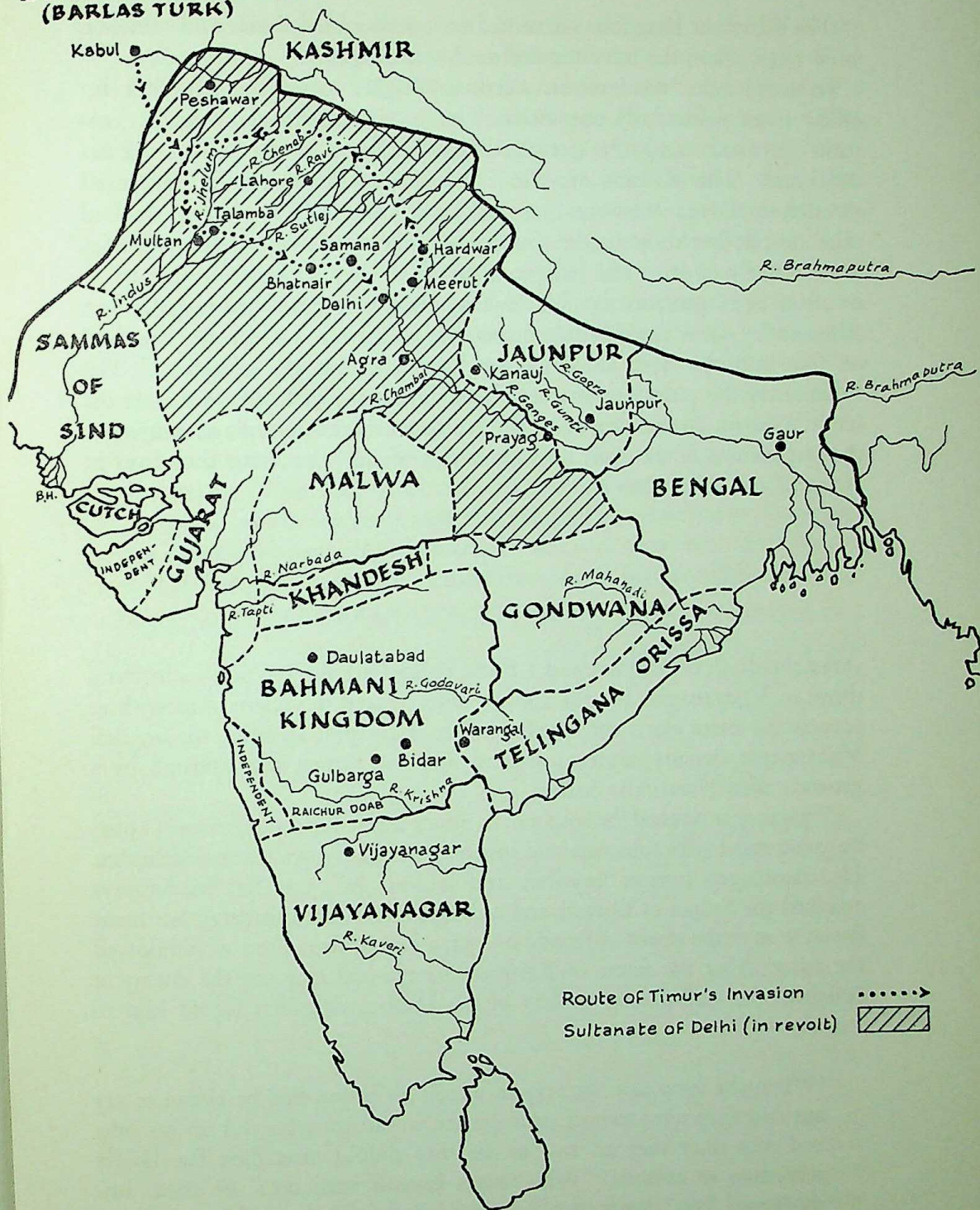
In 1365 occurred the first impact of the Bahmani kingdom upon Hindu Vijayanagar and two years later the Hindus suffered defeat. Again in 1377 and 1398 the Bahmanis attacked and, though they reached the fortifications of the city, were unable to capture it. Of the city and the administration we will learn more in the next part.

Meanwhile, in the Bahmani kingdom in 1378, Muhammad II had acceded to the throne. Muhammad was a comparatively enlightened ruler of some culture. He invited the poet Hafiz to visit him, but a storm in the Persian Gulf frightened the poet so much that he refused to continue the journey. Muhammad also built schools for orphans. He was succeeded by Firuz Shah (1397-1422), under whose rule the Bahmani power reached its apogee. During this reign, Vijayanagar was again attacked, this time with considerable guile—an officer of the Muslim army entered the Hindu camp with others disguised as a troop of jugglers, and killed the king's son. In the confusion, the main Muslim army attacked and defeated the forces of Vijayanagar. A short peace led to another war, romantically and accurately known as 'The War of the Goldsmith's Daughter', which ended in defeat for the Hindus, the payment of an indemnity, and a daughter in marriage for Firuz.

Firuz was a scholar who kept an immense harem which, no doubt, encouraged his natural leanings towards luxury and inaction, at least in the military and political fields. In 1422, he was murdered by his brother Ahmad. Ahmad Shah continued the war against Vijayanagar and transferred his capital to Bidar, presumably because—standing as it did (and does) on a plateau some 2,500 feet above sea-level—it offered a good defensive position.

The last great ruler of the Bahmani kingdom was Muhammad Shah III (1463-82). He extended the kingdom to the sea by capturing Goa, the most important port in the Vijayanagar Empire. However, powerful elements of 'foreigners'—Turks, Arabs, and Persians—holding civil and military offices in the State were in constant conflict with the local Muslims. False evidence was brought against the king's great minister, Mahmud Gawan, and he was killed on the king's orders. In 1482 Muhammad died (aged twenty-nine) screaming that Mahmud Gawan was tearing him to pieces.

EMPIRE OF TIMUR (BARLAS TURK)



INDIA AT THE TIME OF THE INVASION OF TIMUR 1398

The Bahmani kingdom continued in a welter of disorder and rebellion until 1527, when the last ruler fled to Ahmadnagar.

Bahmani rule, whatever its Arabian Nights' overtones, was not inefficient nor particularly oppressive. The ancient system of village government persisted, and the petrification of self-supporting feudal entities continued. The Russian traveller, Athanasius Nikitin, who journeyed through the Deccan between 1470 and 1474 wrote: 'The land is overstocked with people; but those in the country are very miserable, while the nobles are extremely opulent and delight in luxury. They are wont to be carried on silver beds, preceded by some twenty chargers caparisoned in gold, and followed by some three hundred men on horseback and by five hundred on foot, and by horn men, ten torch-bearers, and ten musicians.' The situation of the peasantry changed little, whoever ruled, whoever won the battle. Caught in the ever-tightening corset of the feudal village, subject to the impositions of the army and the terrors of war, they lived their lives in the same patterns as before.

II

THE EMPIRE OF VIJAYANAGAR

After the death of Muhammad III, the Bahmani kingdom was no longer a threat to Vijayanagar, but the Empire still engaged in vicious wars with its successors—particularly the Muslim rulers of Bijapur. In 1486, the original Vijayanagar dynasty came to an end and the throne was usurped by a general called Narasimha Saluva.

Vijayanagar reached the height of its power under Krishnadevaraya (1509–29) who ruled with tolerance and justice, particularly towards non-Hindus. He encouraged foreign travellers and traders. In 1520 Krishnadevaraya attacked the Sultan of Bijapur and a description of the campaign has come down to us in the words of Fernão Nuniz, a Portuguese visitor who followed the army. After the forces of Krishnadevaraya had attacked the enemy at Raichur, the well-placed artillery of the Muslim defenders forced him to retreat.

'When the king saw the way in which his troops fled he began to cry out that they were traitors, and that he would see who was on his side; and that since they all had to die they should meet their fate boldly according to custom. "Who ranges himself with me?" he cried. Immediately there thronged about him all those lords and captains that were ready to side with him, and the king said that the day had arrived in

which the Ydallcão [a Portuguese rendering of the name of Adil Khan, Sultan of Bijapur] would boast that he had slain in it the greatest lord in the world, but that he should never boast that he had vanquished him. Then he took a ring from his finger and gave it to one of his pages, so that he might show it to his queens in token of his death, that they might burn themselves according to custom. Then he mounted a horse and moved forward with all his remaining divisions, commanding to slay without mercy every man of those who had fled. As soon as these last saw what a reception they received at the hand of their fellows they felt compelled to turn and charge the enemy, and their attack was such that not one amongst the Moors was found to face them; for the Moors met them as men engaged in pursuit, all in great disorder. The confusion was so great amongst the Moors and such havoc was wrought [in their ranks] that they did not even try to defend the camp they had made so strong and enclosed so well; but like lost men they leaped into the river to save themselves. Then after them came large numbers of the king's troops and elephants, which latter worked amongst them mischief without end, for they seized men with their trunks and tore them into small pieces, whilst those who rode in the castles [*howdahs*] killed countless numbers.'

The Bijapur army was totally defeated but, in contrast to the barbarity of previous rulers, Krishnadevaraya spared both lives and property in the city.

On Krishnadevaraya's death, his successors became puppets of the minister Ramraja, who combined with the Muslim ruler of Bijapur—the old enemy of Vijayanagar—to attack the Muslim kingdom of Ahmadnagar. The campaign was carried on with extreme ferocity. The population was decimated, mosques destroyed and defiled.

In 1564, the Muslim successors to the Bahmani kingdom—Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, Golconda, and Bidar—combined to attack Ramraja and, in January 1565, a great battle was fought at Talikota. Ramraja was now said to be ninety-six years old. Owing to the Muslims' superiority in artillery the Hindus were defeated, and Ramraja captured and beheaded. On his death, the army was turned into a rabble and slaughtered with ease by the enemy. Ten days later the capital was occupied and almost completely destroyed. The Hindu power in South India was broken.

Much of the information that we have on organization and life in the Vijayanagar Empire is from Portuguese and other foreign travellers. Abdur Razzak, who was an ambassador for the Sultan of Herat, has described the city in 1443.

'The city of Bijanagar [Vijayanagar] is such that the eye has never seen a place like it, and the ear of intelligence has never been informed that

there existed anything to equal it in the world. It is built in such a manner that seven citadels and the same number of walls enclose each other. Around the first citadel are stones the height of a man, one half of which is sunk in the ground while the other half rises above it. These are fixed one beside the other in such a manner that no horse or foot soldier could boldly or with ease approach the citadel.

'The seventh fortress is to the north and is the palace of the king. The distance between the opposite gates of the outer fortress north and south is two *parasangs*, and the same east to west.

'The space which separates the first fortress from the second, and up to the third fortress, is filled with cultivated fields and with houses and gardens. In the space from the third to the seventh, one meets a numberless crowd of people, many shops, and a bazaar. By the king's palace are four bazaars, placed opposite each other. On the north is the portico of the palace of the *rai* [king]. Above each bazaar is the lofty arcade with a magnificent gallery, but the audience-hall of the king's palace is elevated above all the rest. The bazaars are extremely long and broad.

'Roses are sold everywhere. These people could not live without roses, and they look upon them as quite as necessary as food. . . . Each class of men belonging to each profession has shops contiguous one to the other; the jewellers sell publicly in the bazaars pearls, rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. In this agreeable locality, as well as in the king's palace, one sees numerous running streams and canals formed of chiselled stone, polished and smooth.'

And again the city has been described by Domingo Paes, a Portuguese merchant who visited the capital several times during the reign of Krishnadevaraya.

'The size of this city I do not write here, because it cannot all be seen from any one spot, but I climbed a hill whence I could see a great part of it; I could not see it all because it lies between several ranges of hills. What I saw from thence seemed to me as large as Rome, and very beautiful to the sight; there are many groves of trees within it, in the gardens of the houses, and many conduits of water which flow into the midst of it, and in places there are artificial lakes; and the king has close to his palace a palm-grove and other rich-bearing fruit trees. Below the Moorish quarter is a little river, and on this side are many orchards and gardens with many fruit trees, for the most part mangoes and areca-palms and jack trees, also many lime and orange trees, growing so closely to one another that it appears like a thick forest; and there

are also white grapes. All the water which is in the city comes from the two tanks of which I have spoken, outside the first enclosing wall.

'The people in this city are countless in number, so much so that I do not wish to write it down for fear it should be thought fabulous; but I declare that no troops, horse or foot, could break their way through any street or lane, so great are the numbers of the people and elephants.'

The Empire of Vijayanagar was probably the nearest approach to a military State achieved by a Hindu kingdom. Everything was subordinate to the fitness of the large standing army for battle. Fernão Nuniz, who was a companion of Paes, has left a description of the army.

'This king has continually fifty thousand paid soldiers, amongst whom are six thousand horsemen who belong to the palace guard, to which six thousand belong the two hundred who are obliged to ride with him. He has also twenty thousand spearmen and shield-bearers, and three thousand men to look after the elephants in the stables; he has sixteen hundred grooms who attend to the horses and has also three hundred horse-trainers and two thousand artificers, namely blacksmiths, masons, and carpenters, and washermen who wash clothes. These are the people he has and pays every day; he gives them their allowance at the gate of the palace.'

The king was always accessible, and an interesting police procedure operated. If a man 'complains that he was robbed in such and such a province and in such and such a road, the king sends immediately for the captain of that province, even though he be at court, and the captain may be seized and his property taken if he does not catch the thief'. The law was, however, severe.

'The punishments that they inflict in this kingdom are these: for a thief, whatever theft he commits, howsoever little it be, they forthwith cut off a foot and a hand, and if his theft be a great one he is hanged with a hook under his chin. If a man outrages a respectable woman or a virgin he has the same punishment, and if he does any other such violence, his punishment is of a like kind. Nobles who become traitors are sent to be impaled alive on a wooden stake thrust through the belly, and people of the lower orders, for whatever crime they commit, he forthwith commands to cut off their heads in the market-place, and the same for a murder unless the death was the result of a duel. For great honour is done to those who fight in a duel, and they give the estate of the dead man to the survivor; but no-one fights a duel without first asking leave of the minister, who forthwith grants it. These are the common kinds

of punishments, but they have others more fanciful; for when the king so desires, he commands a man to be thrown to the elephants, and they tear him in pieces. The people are so subject to him that if you told a man on the part of the king that he must stand still in the street holding a stone on his back all day till you released him, he would do it.'

Under Krishnadevaraya the traditional autonomy of the village was curtailed, as is usual when a strong central power is in control.

The role of Vijayanagar in the pattern of Indian history is an important one. It preserved at a time of fissionary invasion the Hindu social and political structure. Its monuments are the temples of South India and the 'separateness' of South Indian culture. There have been virtually no Hindu-Muslim antagonisms in its former territories.

A Muslim Visitor to Vijayanagar

The following two descriptions of life in the Empire of Vijayanagar are taken from Abdur Razzak's *Matla-us Sadain*, a history of Timur and his descendants from 1304 to 1470 (the translation of which is contained in Elliot and Dowson's *History of India as told by its own Historians*, vol. IV). Abdur Razzak spent six months in the capital of Devaraya II, from April to December 1443. The Festival of the Great Ninth, the Mahanavi, is a festival in honour of Durga, one of the manifestations of the consort of Siva.

An Attempt to Murder Devaraya II

At the same time that the writer of this history was detained in the city of Calicut, an extraordinary circumstance and singular transaction occurred in the city of Vijayanagar. The details are these. The brother of the King had constructed a new house, and invited the King and the nobles of State to an entertainment. The custom of the infidels is not to eat in the presence of one another. The guests were seated in a large hall, and, from time to time, the host, or some one that he sent, invited one of the nobles to come forward and partake of the viands prepared for him. He had taken care to collect together all the drums, trumpets, and horns in the city, which were beaten and blown together with great dissonance. As each guest was summoned and conducted to the proper apartment, two assassins advanced from the place of their concealment behind the door, and, wounding him with a dagger, cut him to pieces. When his remains were carried off, another one was summoned and treated in like manner, and whoever entered that slaughterhouse was never heard of more, for he became like a traveller on the road to eternity; and the tongue of fortune addressed the murdered man in these words—'You will never return; having gone, you have gone for ever.'

From the noise of the drums and the clangour and the tumult, not a soul knew what

had occurred, except a few who were in the secret; and in this way every one who had a name and position in the State was murdered. While the assembly was yet reeking with the blood of its victims, the murderer went to the palace of the King, and, addressing the guards with flattering language, invited them also to the entertainment, and sent them to follow the others; and thus, having denuded the palace of the guards, he advanced to the King, bearing in his hand a tray of betel, in which there was a brilliant dagger concealed beneath the leaves, and thus addressed the monarch: 'The entertainment is prepared, and only awaits your august presence.' The monarch, according to the saying, 'powerful princes are divinely inspired', said that he was indisposed, and begged that his attendance might be excused.

When this unnatural brother despaired of the King's attendance, he drew forth the poignard, and wounded him several times severely so that the monarch fell down behind the throne; and the perfidious wretch, believing that he was dead, left one of his myrmidons behind to cut off the King's head. He himself rushed out of the portico of the palace, and exclaimed: 'I have killed the King, his brothers, the nobles, the ministers, and the other chiefs, and I am now your King.' But when the bravo advanced to fulfil his murderous orders, the King, seizing the seat behind which he had fallen, dealt with it such a blow upon the breast of the villain, that it felled him to the ground, and, assisted by one of the guards, who in alarm had concealed himself in a corner, put him to death, and ran out of the chamber by way of the female apartments. While his brother, seated at the head of the tribunal of justice, was inviting the people to recognize him as their sovereign, the King himself came forward and exclaimed: 'Behold, I am alive and safe; seize the assassin.' The multitude immediately bore him down and slew him. The King then summoned to his presence his other brothers, and all the nobles; but every one had been slain except the minister, the *Danaik*, who, previous to this dreadful tragedy, had gone to Silan. A courier was dispatched to summon him, and inform him of what had transpired. All those who had been concerned in the plot were either flayed alive, or burned to death, or destroyed in some other fashion, and their families were altogether exterminated.

The Festival of the Great Ninth

The infidels of this country, who are endowed with power, are fond of displaying their pride, pomp, power, and glory, in holding every year a stately and magnificent festival, which they call Mahanavi. The manner of it is this: the King of Vijayanagar directed that his nobles and chiefs should assemble at the royal abode from all the provinces of his country, which extends for the distance of three or four months' journey. They brought with them a thousand elephants, tumultuous as the sea, and thundering as the clouds, arrayed in armour, and adorned with howdahs, on which jugglers and throwers of naphtha were seated; and on the foreheads, trunks, and ears of the elephants extraordinary forms and pictures were traced with cinnabar and other pigments.

The chiefs of the army and the powerful men of each province, and the wise Brahmins

The Islamic Conquests

124

and the demon-like elephants, were assembled at the court of the ruler of the world at the appointed time, which was at the full moon of Rajab, on a broad plain. This wonderful expanse of ground, from the numbers of people and huge elephants, resembled the waves of the green sea, and the myriads which will appear on the Plains of the Resurrection.

On that beautiful plain were raised enchanting pavilions of from two to five stages high, on which from top to bottom were painted all kinds of figures that the imagination can conceive, of men, wild animals, birds, and all kinds of beasts, down to flies and gnats. All these were painted with exceeding delicacy and taste. Some of these pavilions were so constructed that they revolved, and every moment offered a different face to the view. Every instant each stage and each chamber presented a new and charming sight.

In the front of that plain, a pillared edifice was constructed of nine storeys in height, ornamented with exceeding beauty. The throne of the King was placed on the ninth storey. The place assigned to me was the seventh storey, from which every one was excluded except my own friends. Between this palace and the pavilions there was an open space beautifully laid out, in which singers and story-tellers exercised their respective arts. The singers were for the most part young girls, with cheeks like the moon, and faces more blooming than the spring, adorned with beautiful garments and displaying figures which ravished the heart like fresh roses. They were seated behind a beautiful curtain, opposite the King. On a sudden the curtain was removed on both sides, and the girls began to move their feet with such grace, that wisdom lost its senses, and the soul was intoxicated with delight.

On the third day when the king was about to leave the scene of the festival, I was carried before the throne of His Majesty. It was of a prodigious size, made of gold inlaid with beautiful jewels, and ornamented with exceeding delicacy and art; seeing that this kind of manufacture is nowhere excelled in other parts of the earth. Before the throne was placed a cushion of *zaituni* satin, round which three rows of the most exquisite pearls were sewn. During the three days the king sat on the throne, and when the celebration of the Mahanavi was over, he sent for this humble individual one evening at the time of prayer. On arriving at the palace I saw four stages laid out about ten yards square. The whole roof and walls of the apartment were covered with plates of gold inlaid with jewels. Each of these plates was about the thickness of the back of a sword, and was firmly fixed with nails of gold. On the first stage, the king's royal seat was placed. This was formed of gold, and was of great size. The king sat upon it in state.

In that assembly, one of the courtiers asked me, by means of an interpreter, what I thought of the beauty of the four embroidered sofas, implying that such could not be made in our country. I replied that perhaps they might be made equally well there, but that it is not the custom to manufacture such articles. The King approved highly of my reply, and ordered that I should receive several bags of *fanams* and betel, and some fruits reserved for his special use.

The Lodi Interlude

THE INVASION OF TIMUR and the destruction of the Turkish kingdom of Delhi was followed, throughout the fifteenth century, by a long period of conflict, details of which would not only be intolerably boring but purposeless, for like the advertisements that appear to interrupt the action of a television play—though they may be interesting in themselves—they have no relevance to the action that is to follow.

Nevertheless, there are certain factors of importance. The destruction of Turkish rule was, basically, the destruction of a system which began and remained during its power and decline an alien system, in brief, an occupation. Assimilation, except on a sexual level, was virtually unknown and the Turks remained foreigners in the Indian social climate. This was not to be true of their Muslim successors, as we shall see. The impact of Islam on Hinduism will be treated in the next chapter.

Politically, the situation of the Muslim successors—the sultanates of Bengal, Jaunpur, Gujarat, and Malwa—represents a significant change in the attitudes of the rulers. The Turkish kingdom of Delhi, with its imperial pretensions and religious arrogance, was fundamentally a 'camp' administration. It remained a military occupation and all its actions were concerned to preserve and expand its power.

The successors, however, were interested in maintaining their succession, and this called for an administrative system designed to produce solidarity. The easiest way to achieve this was to assure the interest of the people in the continuance of the régime by tolerance, protection, and a guarantee of justice. As the trade/economy was very much in the hands of Hindus, it was necessary to produce a climate of security.

In Gujarat, which had been declared independent of Delhi by Zafar Khan in 1401, trade/wealth was guaranteed by the ports and entrepôts of the west coast. Its rulers were men of culture. Ahmad Shah (1411-41) built a magnificent capital at Ahmadabad which came to be known to foreigners as the 'Venice of western India'. Mahmud Bigarha (1459-1511) overran Kathiawar and Cutch, and his successor waged constant war against the Rajputs. Gujarat was finally annexed by Akbar in 1572.

The sultanate of Malwa also fought against the Rajputs when it was not fighting Gujarat. In Malwa, again, relations between Muslims and Hindus

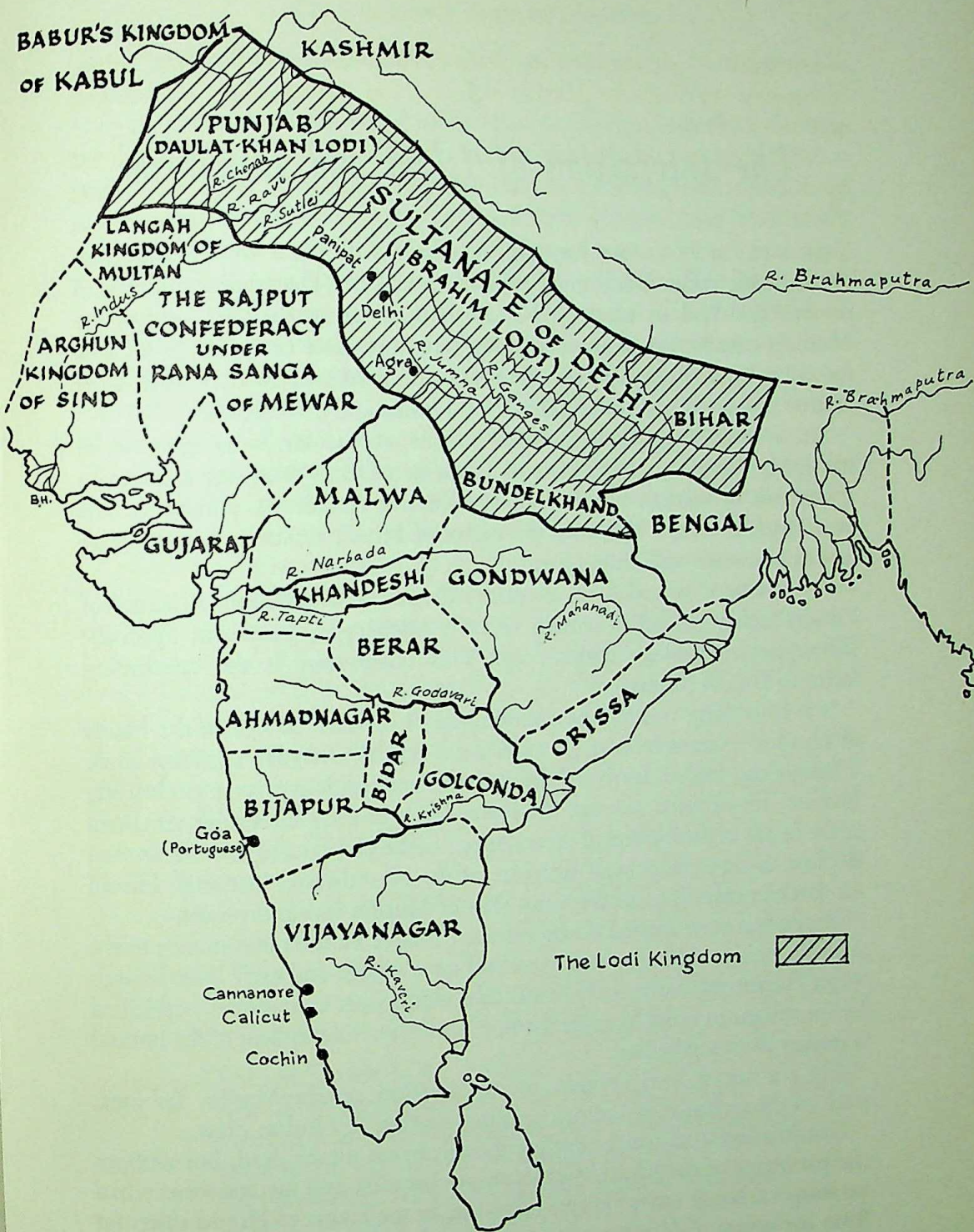
were cordial. Under one of the sultans (Mahmud II) Hindu rulers helped to suppress rebellions by Muslim nobility, and Mahmud's prime minister was also a Hindu.

Meanwhile at Delhi Timur's viceroy, Khizr Khan, had been succeeded by three members of his family. This dynasty, known as Sayyid because of Khizr's claim to be a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, ceased in 1450 and after an interval the throne was assumed by Bahlul, an Afghan of the Lodi tribe who had been a nominally subservient governor of the Punjab under the Sayyids. He ruled from 1451 to 1489 and after some thirty years of wars the sultanate of Jaunpur was annexed by him. His rule was again a foreign occupation for he ruled through Afghans to whom he paid large salaries.

Bahlul was succeeded by his son Sikandar Lodi (1489-1517) who effectively ruled from the Indus to the frontier of Bengal. Sikandar moved his capital to Agra in order to have his base nearer to his military operations against the Hindu chiefs to the south and west of the river Jumna. Muslim historians, searching, as all propagandist historians do in times of anarchy and indecision, for a Golden Age, found it in the reign of Sikandar.

'Every business had its appointed time, and an established custom was never changed. He always behaved to the nobles and great men of his time in the way he did on the first day of the interview. . . . The Sultan daily received an account of the prices of all things, and an account of what happened in districts of the Empire. If he perceived the slightest appearance of anything wrong, he caused instant inquiries to be made about it. In his reign, business was carried on in an honest, straightforward way. . . . Factory establishments were so encouraged that all young nobles and soldiers were engaged in useful work. . . . All the nobles and soldiers of Sikandar were satisfied: each of his chiefs was appointed to the government of a district, and it was his especial desire to gain the good-will and affections of the body of the people. For the sake of his officers and troops he put an end to wars and disputes with the other monarchs and nobles of the period, and closed the road to contention and strife. He contented himself with the territory bequeathed him by his father, and passed the whole of his life in the greatest safety and enjoyment, and gained the hearts of high and low.'

Sikandar was succeeded by his son, Ibrahim, who through distrust of the powerful Afghan nobility drove them into rebellion, firstly in Bihar and then in Lahore. The governor of the latter, Daulat Khan Lodi, appealed for help to Babur, king of Kabul—an action which led to the death of Ibrahim at Panipat in 1526, and the establishment of the Mughal Empire.



INDIA IN 1525

The Interaction of Islam and Hinduism

THE FIRST MUSLIMS brought very little with them apart from their monotheistic religion and good military discipline. The Islamic concept of the one god had its effect on Hindu thought, as we shall see, and as the Muslims became less of an occupation force and more conscious of the role the conquered played in the continuance and security of their rule, their culture and art began to infiltrate Hindu forms and civilization.

As a crusading religion, Islam needed vernacular languages for its missionary exercise, and the rise of Urdu as a literary language came from a synthesis of western Hindi with Persian and Arabic. A number of fine poets such as Amir Khusru, 'the parrot of Hind', wrote in this language as did historians and chroniclers.

As has been recorded in an earlier chapter, the economic structure of Hindu society tended to remain virtually unchanged, based still upon the self-supporting village community. This community is the continuing factor in Indian history.

It is interesting to note the continuance of the civil service in the hands of Hindus. Administrative Empires need capable everyday administrators. Though the higher levels of the revenue and judiciary were exclusively Muslim, for obvious reasons, the lower levels of the civil service remained in the hands of the legatees of the traditions of the Guptas and their successors. Because of this, the general structure of the now defunct 'national' Hindu monarchies continued under a top skin of Muslim law and power.

Trade was now carried on by Hindus. Native bankers lent money to the Muslim nobles. Manufactures were still on a village and craft basis though larger enterprises, particularly in silk and cloth, were monopolies established by the sultans in order to make them, if necessary, independent of the normal Treasury during rebellion.

On the social level, Hindu society adopted certain Muslim fashions, such as the seclusion of women and the wearing of Muslim dress.

Sanskrit literature was in decline though by no means dead, but without the patronage of the leisure class its empty paradox and hieratic secrecy had no longer a social *cachet* except, of course, at the courts of Hindu rulers far from the centre of Muslim power.

Within the Muslim dominions the social implications of Sanskrit as a class symbol no longer held a place in the structure of power, and the

rise of vernacular literatures both sacred and secular can be traced to this period.

In art and architecture, the Turkish invaders brought with them the arch, the dome, and the minaret. Their Indian architecture is a grafting of these on indigenous styles, a hybrid which has become known as Indo-Islamic. In many cases, carved pillars looted from Hindu temples were used in the construction of mosques.

In the religious field the impact of Islam was profound. This came about through Sufism, a reaction against the cold formality of orthodox Islam. Sufi ideas are non-ritualistic and have a touch of pantheism about them. The Sufi aspires to a growing acquaintance with God, such as will culminate in ecstatic devotion, a love that will so envelop the soul as to destroy all inferior affections and desires. This communication is reached in five stages: (1) service—obedience to the law of God; (2) love—the attraction of the soul to God; (3) seclusion—meditation on divine things; (4) knowledge—metaphysical studies on the nature and attributes of God; and (5) ecstasy—the result of a full comprehension of divine love and power.

The Hindu response can be seen in the doctrine of *bhakti*, first formulated by Ramanuja. Sometime towards the end of the fourteenth century, a teacher named Ramananda who was a disciple of Ramanuja founded at Benares a new sect for the propagation of this devotional religion. He taught in the vernacular, and the fifteenth century saw a remarkable volume of religious poetry permeated with these new ideas. Among the disciples and followers of Ramananda was the weaver Kabir who attempted a synthesis of Islam and Hinduism. He wrote: 'God is one, whether we worship him as Allah or as Rama. The Hindu worships him on the eleventh day; the Muhammadan fasts at Ramadan; but God made all the days and all the months. The Hindu god lives at Banaras [Benares], the Muhammadan god at Mecca; but He who made the world lives not in a city made by hands. There is one Father of Hindu and Mussulman.'

Much of Kabir's poetry is very fine and lucid, its ideas accessible to ordinary people, as can be seen in the following translation:

'The jewel is lost in the mud,
And all are seeking for it:
Some look for it in the east, and some in the west,
Some in the water and some amongst stones.
But the servant Kabir has appraised it at its true value,
And has wrapped it with care
In a corner of the mantle of his heart.'

Kabir's poetry is part of the living literature of India today.

The Islamic Conquests

130

The idea of *bhakti* also had expression in the poetry of Mira Bai, a Rajput princess, in that of Chaitanya who preached in Bengal and inspired a vast vernacular literature, and of Nanak the founder of the Sikhs. This great movement of *bhakti* can hardly be said to have been inspired by Islam, as its doctrine had existed before the coming of the Muslims. Nevertheless, the monotheistic character of Islam, and the need for a powerful reply when conversion to the religion of the invader had much to commend it, certainly must have given impetus to the new formulations that appeared.

Religious poetry in the vernaculars gave an opening to secular writings, and these are also permeated with a freshness and reality that cannot be found in Sanskrit. The unity of the Hindu people is due to the continuance of Sanskrit as a sort of super-language, remote, unreal, yet cherished for its associations, combined with the virility of the vernaculars as the medium for the spread of ideas and the preservation of tradition.

Babur and the Foundation of the Mughal Empire

BABUR WAS A DIRECT DESCENDANT of Timur and of Chingiz Khan, a combination of ancestry which was not without its effect. He succeeded to the petty principality of Farghana, in what is now Soviet Turkestan, when only a child. Having survived attempts to depose him, he captured Samarkand in 1497 but was driven out and spent years in wandering and poverty. In 1504 he occupied Kabul with a small number of adherents. Babur, who wrote his own biography, described his conquering army: 'The followers who still adhered to my fortunes, great and small, exceeded two hundred and fell short of three hundred. The greater part of them were on foot with sandals on their feet, clubs in their hands, and long frocks over their shoulders. Such was their distress that among us all we had only two tents. My own tent was pitched for my mother.'

Kabul was on the road to India and Babur, as head of the house of Timur, turned his eyes towards the Punjab.

'From the year 910 [A.D. 1505], when I obtained the principality of Kabul, up to the date of the events I now record [i.e. the defeat of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi], I have never ceased to think of the conquest of Hindustan. But I had never found a suitable opportunity for undertaking it, hindered as I was, sometimes by the apprehensions of my *Begs* [barons], sometimes by disagreements between my brothers and myself. Finally all these obstacles were happily removed. Great and small, *Begs* and captains, no-one dared to say a word against the project. So in 925 [A.D. 1519] I left at the head of my army, and made a start by taking Bajaur. . . . From this time to 932 [A.D. 1525-6] I was always actively concerned in the affairs of Hindustan. I went there in person at the head of an army, five times in the course of seven or eight years. The fifth time, by the munificence and liberality of God, there fell beneath my blows an enemy as formidable as Sultan Ibrahim, and I gained the vast empire of Hind.'

But at first, with only inadequate strength and a certain lack of security in his home-base of Kabul, Babur could do no more than raid. In 1524,

however, Daulat Khan Lodi at Lahore asked his aid in overthrowing Ibrahim Lodi at Delhi.

Babur moved against Hindustan. At Panipat—that decisive battle-ground of India—he destroyed in April 1526 the Lodi dynasty and its king. The battle was interesting for the use of fire-arms. The forces of the Lodi king numbered about 50,000 men and 1,000 elephants. Babur had only some 8,000 men but also matchlock-men and artillery. Babur's tactics were to tighten his enemy's army into a compact mass and then break it by artillery fire, leaving some 20,000 dead including Ibrahim himself.

Babur immediately occupied Delhi and Agra, and with his usual inquisitiveness looked around him at his new kingdom.

'Hindustan is a country which has few pleasures to recommend it. The people are not handsome. They have no idea of the charms of friendly society, of frankly mixing together, or familiar intercourse. They have no genius, no comprehension of mind, no politeness of manner, no kindness or fellow-feeling, no ingenuity or mechanical invention in planning or executing their handicraft works, no skill or knowledge in design or architecture; they have no horses, no good flesh, no grapes or musk-melons, no good fruits, no ice or cold water, no good food or bread in their bazaars, no baths or colleges, no candles, no torches, not a candlestick. . . . Beside their rivers and standing waters, they have some running water in their ravines and hollows; they have no aqueducts or canals in their gardens or palaces. In their buildings they study neither elegance nor climate, appearance nor regularity. . . . The chief excellency of Hindustan is, that it is a large country and has abundance of gold and silver. The climate during the rains is very pleasant. On some days it rains ten, fifteen, and even twenty times. During the rainy season inundations come pouring down all at once, and form rivers, even in places where at other times there is no water. While the rains continue on the ground, the air is singularly delightful, insomuch that nothing can surpass its soft and agreeable temperature. Its defect is, that the air is rather moist and damp. During the rainy season you cannot shoot even with the bow of our country and it becomes quite useless. Nor is it the bow alone that becomes useless: the coats of mail, books, clothes, and furniture all feel the bad effects of the moisture. Their houses too, suffer from not being substantially built. There is pleasant enough weather in the winter and summer, as well as in the rainy season; but then the north wind always blows, and there is an excessive quantity of earth and dust flying about. When the rains are at hand, this wind blows five or six times with excessive violence, and such a quantity of dust

flies about that you cannot see one another. They call this an *andhi* [storm or tempest]. It gets warm during Taurus and Gemini, but not so warm as to become intolerable. The heat cannot be compared to the heats of Balkh and Kandahar. It is not half so warm as in these places. Another convenience of Hindustan is that the workmen of every profession and trade are innumerable and without end. For any work, or any employment, there is always a set ready, to whom the same employment and trade have descended from father to son for ages.'

All, however, was not over: conquest must continue. Some of Babur's own men, hillmen hating the plains, wanted to loot and return to Kabul. Those who wished to go, left, those who remained were rewarded with land and money. Babur won over some of the Afghans, but many retired to Bengal where they were welcomed. But his main problem lay in the Rajputs of the south.

During the Lodi interlude, the Rajputs had continued their independence in the Rajputana, more often than not fighting each other. But in the reign of Ibrahim a confederacy had assembled under the leadership of Rana Sangram Singh, the ruler of Mewar, in order to attack the declining power of the Lodi.

Negotiations were entered into with Babur but on his defeat of Ibrahim the confederacy turned against him. On their approach to Agra, Babur, again with even better artillery, destroyed a vast army of Rajputs at Khanua in March 1527. Many of the Rajput chiefs were killed, and with them died the last hope of restoring Hindu supremacy in northern India. Babur also defeated the Afghans of Bengal near Patna (Pataliputra) but had little time to impose a settled and secure administration, as he died in 1530, aged forty-seven. Of his last illness the following story is told. His son Humayun was dangerously ill and Babur, seeking help from a holy man, was told that perhaps God would accept in exchange for his son's recovery the sacrifice of his most precious possession. Babur, walking three times around his son's bed, cried 'O God, if a life may be exchanged for a life, I, Babur, give my life for Humayun.' A little while afterwards he was heard to say 'I have prevailed! I have borne it away! I have saved him!' Humayun began to recover while Babur sickened and died.

Humayun succeeded his father and was, in the first few years of his reign, successful in beginning the organization of his dominions. In 1535 he invaded Gujarat and Malwa, but the next year brought a serious situation in Bihar. Sher Khan, the Afghan Governor of Bihar who had gone over to the conqueror, set himself up in independence and expanded his territories towards Bengal. Humayun, who was intelligent but lazy, reluctantly moved

against him and recaptured the Bengal capital of Laknauti, where he spent three months in luxurious idleness. Humayun's army was depleted by disease and desertion when news came of a rebellion in Delhi. Humayun then moved westwards but was defeated by Sher Khan in two battles, and in 1540 he was compelled to flee to the Rajputana. Fearing assassination he again fled, this time to Sind, where a son was born to him in October 1542. This child was later to be the Emperor Akbar. Humayun was at this time in Persia seeking the aid of Shah Tamasp.

Sher Khan now assumed the throne under the title of Sher Shah. He was one of the most remarkable rulers in the history of India. A great military leader and organizer, he was also an astute administrator.

'He set up courts of justice in every place and was ever busy in founding charities. For the easement of poor travellers, he made a rest-house on every road at an interval of two leagues, and one such road with rest-houses ran from the Punjab to Sunargaon in Bengal, and others from Agra to Burhanpur and to Chitor, and from Lahore to Multan. In each rest-house were separate lodgings for Hindus and Muslims, supplied with pots of water, beds and food and grain for the horses. In each rest-house two horses were kept for quick dispatch of news. "If my life last long enough," he said, "I shall build a fort in every district, to be a refuge for the oppressed and a curb to the turbulent, and make all the earthen rest-houses of brick for the safety and protection of the highway."'

Intent on expanding the kingdom, Sher Shah captured Gwalior and then Malwa. Unfortunately, he was killed during the siege of Kalinjar, a Hindu stronghold some hundred and twenty miles east of Jhansi, in 1545.

In his short reign, Sher Shah had left one mark upon the future. He organized a vast bureaucracy directly responsible to the ruler. The revenue was no longer arbitrary but carefully calculated. His methods formed the basis for the agrarian system established under Akbar. For the first time during the Islamic conquest the contract between the people and the ruler was systematized. Under Sher Shah there was little oppression or corruption.

Sher Shah's successors need take up little space. Islam Shah (1545-54) and Muhammad Adil Shah (1554-5) were incapable rulers, and the kingdom was actually administered by a Hindu minister. In 1555 Humayun reconquered Delhi, but died the following year from injuries after falling down the marble steps of his palace.

Humayun was an intelligent man, gay, brave, and indolent. His reign lasted for twenty-five years, sixteen of which were spent in exile, and he returned to power only to die by a casual accident. As one nineteenth-century

Babur and the Foundation of the Mughal Empire

135

historian wrote: 'His life had been the sport of fortune—his death was to resemble it.' He was succeeded by his son, Akbar, aged thirteen.

A Victory for Babur

The greatest menace to the newly established kingdom of Babur lay in the chiefs of the Rajputana. Only nine months after the battle of Panipat, Babur was forced to take the field against the Rana of Chitor. The Rana, with a large army determined to win or die, forced Babur from the fort of Biana. Shortly afterwards, on or about 18 February 1527, an advance guard of the Mughal forces was completely routed. Panic spread through the Mughal forces. The Rana, however, for reasons still unknown, did not press his advantage and left Babur alone for nearly a month. At Khanua, Babur in turn defeated the Rana, who escaped from the field and died a short time later. In this selection from the *Memoirs* of Babur himself (English version by Erskine and Leyden, first published in 1826), the Emperor can be seen for what he was, a great man and a great leader.

At this time, as I have already observed, in consequence of preceding events, a general consternation and alarm prevailed among great and small. There was not a single person who uttered a manly word, nor an individual who delivered a courageous opinion. The Wazirs, whose duty it was to give good counsel, and the Amirs, who enjoyed the wealth of kingdoms, neither spoke bravely, nor was their counsel or deportment such as became men of firmness. During the whole course of the expedition Khalifa [the Prime Minister] conducted himself admirably, and was unremitting and indefatigable in his endeavours to put everything in the best order. At length, observing the universal discouragement of my troops, and their total want of spirit, I formed my plan. I called an assembly of all the Amirs and officers, and addressed them: 'Noblemen and soldiers! Every man that comes into the world is subject to dissolution. When we are passed away and gone, God only survives, unchangeable. Whoever comes to the feast of life, must, before it is over, drink from the cup of death. He who arrives at the inn of mortality, must one day inevitably take his departure from that house of sorrow—the world. How much better is it to die with honour than to live with infamy!

'With fame, even if I die, I am contented;
Let fame be mine, since my body is Death's.

The most high God has been propitious to us, and has now placed us in such a crisis, that if we fall in the field, we die the death of martyrs; if we survive, we rise victorious, the avengers of the cause of God. Let us, then, with one accord, swear on God's holy word, that none of us will even think of turning his face from this warfare, nor desert from the battle and slaughter that ensues, till his soul is separated from his body.'

Master and servant, small and great, all with emulation, seizing the blessed Koran in

their hands, swore in the form that I have given. My plan succeeded to admiration, and its effects were instantly visible, far and near, on friend and foe.

The danger and confusion on all sides were particularly alarming at this very moment. Husain Khan Lohari had advanced and taken Raberi, Kutub Khan's people had taken Chandwar. A man of the name Rustum Khan, having assembled a body of Doab bowmen, had come and taken Koel, and made Kichek Ali prisoner. Zahid had been compelled to evacuate Sambal and had rejoined me. Sultan Muhammad Duldai had retired from Kanauj, and joined my army. The Pagans of the surrounding country came and blockaded Gwalior. Alim Khan, who had been sent to the succour of Gwalior, instead of proceeding to that place, had marched off to his own country. Every day some unpleasant news reached us from one place or another. Many Hindustanis began to desert from the army. Haibat Khan Gurg-andaz fled to Sambal. Hasan Khan Bariwal fled and joined the Pagans. Without minding the fugitives, we continued to regard only our own force. On Tuesday, the 9th of the latter Jumadi, on the day of the *nauroz*, I advanced my guns, and tripods that moved on wheels, with all the apparatus and machines which I had prepared, and marched forward with my army, regularly drawn up and divided into right and left wing and centre, in battle order. I sent forward in front the guns and tripods placed on wheel-carriages. Behind them was stationed Ustad Ali Juli, with a body of matchlock-men, to prevent the communication between the artillery and infantry, who were behind, from being cut off, and to enable them to advance and form into line. After the ranks were formed, and every man stationed in his place, I galloped along the line, animating the *Begs* and troops of the centre, right, and left, giving each division special instructions how they were to act, and to every man orders how to conduct himself, and in what manner he was to engage; and having made these arrangements, I ordered the army to move on in order of battle for about a *kos*, when we halted to encamp. The Pagans, on getting notice of our motions, were on the alert, and several parties drew out to face us, and advanced close up to our guns and ditch.

After our army had encamped, and when we had strengthened and fortified our position in front, as I did not intend fighting that day, I pushed on a few of our troops to skirmish with a party of the enemy, by way of taking an omen. They took a number of Pagans and cut off their heads, which they brought away. Malik Kasim also cut off and brought in some heads. He behaved extremely well. This incident raised the spirits of our army excessively, and had a wonderful effect in giving them confidence in themselves.

Next morning, I marched from that station, with the intention of offering battle; when Khalifa and some of my advisers represented to me, that as the ground on which we had fixed for halting was near at hand, it would be proper, in the first place, to throw up a ditch and to fortify it, after which we might march forward and occupy the position. Khalifa accordingly mounted to give directions about the ditch, and rejoined us, after having set pioneers to work on the different parts of it, and appointed proper persons to superintend their progress.

A Victory for Babur

137

On Saturday, the 13th of the latter Jumadi, having dragged forward our guns, and advanced our right, left, and centre in battle array, for nearly a *kos*, we reached the ground that had been prepared for us. Many tents were already pitched, and they were engaged in pitching others, when news was brought that the enemy's army was in sight. I immediately mounted, and gave orders that every man should, without delay, repair to his post, and that the guns and lines should be properly strengthened. As the letter announcing my subsequent victory contains a clear, detailed account of the circumstances of the Army of the Faith, the number of the Pagan bands, the order of battle and arrangements of both the Mussulman and Pagan armies, I shall therefore subjoin the official dispatch, announcing the victory, as composed by Shaikh Zain, without adding or taking away.

'The battle began about half past nine in the morning, by a desperate charge made by the Rajputs on Babur's right. Bodies of the reserve were pushed on to its assistance; and Mustafa Rumi, who commanded one portion of the artillery and matchlocks on the right of the centre, opened a fire on the assailants. Still, new bodies of the enemy poured on undauntedly, and new detachments from the reserve were sent to resist them. The battle was no less desperate on the left, to which also it was found necessary to dispatch repeated parties from the reserve. When the battle had lasted several hours, and still continued to rage, Babur sent orders to the flanking columns to wheel round and charge; and he soon after ordered the guns to advance, and, by a simultaneous movement, the household troops and cavalry stationed behind the cannon were ordered to gallop out on the right and left of the matchlock-men in the centre, who also moved forward and continued their fire, hastening to fling themselves with all their fury on the enemy's centre. When this was observed in the wings, they also advanced. These unexpected movements, made at the same moment, threw the enemy into confusion. Their centre was shaken; the men who were displaced by the attack made in flank, on the wings and rear, were forced upon the centre and crowded together. Still the gallant Rajputs were not appalled. They made repeated and desperate attacks on the Emperor's centre, in the hopes of recovering the day; but were bravely and steadily received, and swept away in great numbers. Towards evening, the confusion was complete, and the slaughter was consequently dreadful. The fate of the battle was decided. Nothing remained for the Rajputs but to force their way through the bodies of the enemy that were now in their rear, and to effect a retreat.'

After this victory I used the epithet *Ghazi* [victorious over the enemies of the Faith], in the imperial titles. On the *Fatehnamah* [or official account of the victory], below the imperial titles (inscribed on the back of the dispatches), I wrote the following verses:

For the love of the Faith I became a wanderer in the desert,
I became the antagonist of Pagans and Hindus,
I strove to make myself a martyr; —
Thanks to the Almighty God who has made me a *Ghazi*.

Having defeated the enemy, we pursued them with great slaughter. The camp might be two *kos* distance from ours. On reaching it, I sent Muhammadi, Abdul Aziz, Ali Khan, and some other officers, with orders to follow them in close pursuit, slaying and cutting them off, so that they should not have time to reassemble. In this instance, I was guilty of neglect; I should myself have gone on and urged the pursuit, and ought not to have entrusted that business to another. I had got about a *kos* beyond the enemy's camp when I turned back, the day being spent, and reached my own about bed-time prayers. Muhammad Sharif, the astrologer, whose perverse and seditious practices I have mentioned, came to congratulate me on my victory. I poured forth a torrent of abuse upon him; and when I had relieved my heart by it, although he was heathenishly inclined, perverse, extremely self-conceited, and an insufferable evil-speaker, yet, as he had been my old servant, I gave him a *lakh* as a present, and dismissed him, commanding him not to remain within my dominions.

Next day we continued on the same ground. I dispatched Muhammad Ali Jang-Jang, Shaikh Kuran, and Abdul Malik Korchi, with a large force against Rustum Khan, who had made an insurrection in the Doab, surprised Koel, and taken Kichek Ali prisoner. On the arrival of my detachment, the enemy, finding that they could not cope with them, fled in all directions, in confusion and dismay. Some days after my return to Agra, Rustum Khan was taken and brought in. I ordered him to be flayed alive.

The battle was fought within view of a small hill near our camp. On this hillock, I directed a tower of the skulls of the infidels to be constructed. From this encampment, the third march brought us to Biana. Immense numbers of the dead bodies of the Pagans and apostates had fallen in their flight, all the way to Biana, and even as far as Alwar and Mewar.

PRINCIPAL DATES

A.D.

c. 962	Foundation of the kingdom of Ghazni
977-97	Reign of Sabuktigin
986	Sabuktigin defeats Jaipal at Bhatinda
997-1030	Reign of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni
1018	Kanauj seized by Mahmud of Ghazni
1018-60	Raja Bhoja of Malwa
1026	Sack of Somnath
1070-1122	Kulottunga I Chola
1192	Muhammad of Ghur defeats Prithviraj at Tarain
1194	Kutub-ud-din Aibak takes Benares
1199	Muhammad ibn Bhaktyar takes Bihar
1206	Death of Muhammad of Ghur and accession of Kutub-ud-din in India
1210	Death of Kutub-ud-din
1210-11	Accession of Iltutmish
1221	Invasion of the Mongols under Chingiz Khan
1231-2	Foundation of the Kutub Minar
1236	Death of Iltutmish
	Accession and deposition of Firuz
	Accession of Raziyya
1240	Deposition and murder of Raziyya
	Accession of Bahram
1246	Accession of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud
1266	Death of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud
	Accession of Ghiyas-ud-din Balban
1279	Latest known date of Rajendra IV Chola
1287	Death of Balban
	Accession of Mu'iz-ud-din Kaikubal
	Mongol invasion repelled
1290	Death of Kaikubal
	Accession of Jalal-ud-din
1292	Mongol invasion
1293	Marco Polo in South India
1296	Death of Jalal-ud-din
	Accession of Ala-ud-din
1306	Kafur's expedition to Deogiri
1316	Death of Ala-ud-din
	Accession of Shihab-ud-din Umar
	Deposition of Umar and accession of Kutub-ud-din

The Islamic Conquests

140	
1320	Accession of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluk
1323	Mongol invasion
1325	Accession of Muhammad Tughluk
1327	Transference of the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad
1328	Mongols invade India
1336	Traditional date of the foundation of Vijayanagar
1347	Ala-ud-din proclaimed Sultan of the Deccan
1351	Death of Muhammad Tughluk
	Accession of Firuz
1353	Firuz's first expedition to Bengal
1359	Firuz's second expedition to Bengal
1360	Firuz's expedition to Orissa
1363	Firuz's first expedition to Sind
1388	Death of Firuz
1398	Invasion of Timur
1414	Khizr Khan occupies Delhi
1429	Transfer of the Bahmani capital from Gulbarga to Bidar
1443	Abdur Razzak comes to India
1451	Bahlul Lodi ascends the throne of Delhi
1459-1511	Mahmud Bigarha
1469	Birth of Guru Nanak
1481	Murder of Mahmud Gawan
1486	Fall of the Sangama dynasty of Vijayanagar
	Beginning of the rule of the Saluva dynasty
1489	Accession of Sikandar Lodi
1497	Babur at Samarkand
1503	Beginning of the rule of the Tuluva dynasty in Vijayanagar
1504	Babur occupies Kabul
1509	Accession of Krishnadevaraya
1517	Death of Sikandar Lodi
	Accession of Ibrahim Lodi
1526	First battle of Panipat
1527	Battle of Khanua
1529	Death of Krishnadevaraya
1530	Death of Babur and accession of Humayun
1540	Humayun flees to Rajputana
	Sher Shah at Delhi
1545	Death of Sher Shah
1555	Humayun recovers the throne of Delhi
1556	Death of Humayun

Part Three

THE EUROPEAN INFILTRATION

I

The Portuguese in India

THE ENTRY OF THE PORTUGUESE into Indian history arose from a combination of fear, jealousy, and zeal: fear of the encroaching power of Islam upon Christendom, jealousy of the monopoly of trade in the products of the Indies held by the Muslim powers in the eastern Mediterranean, and zeal for the prospect of spreading Christianity among the heathen. The combination of these three imperatives made it possible for a tiny nation to push outwards into unknown seas and 'barbarous' lands.

As Faria y Sousa put it in his *Portuguese Asia*: 'The Christian Princes busied in destroying each other, looked on their [the Muslim] Progress, without putting any stop to this Current; when the Kings of Portugal, as the first who had shaken off themselves the Burthen of these Barbarians and the first who passed over to crush them in Africk (obeying the Decrees of Heaven which required it) undertook to be the first to stop their proceeding in Asia.' To add tone to the whole proceedings and to secure the alliance, or at least the awareness, of Heaven in the undertaking, a Bull was procured from Pope Alexander VI Borgia in 1494 to the effect that all lands to the east of a line drawn north and south three hundred and seventy miles from the coast of Europe were the perquisite of the king of Portugal—in reality, an extension of that super-Empire of Christ whose head is the Pope.

After intense investigation of the coasts of Africa, a royal fleet under Vasco da Gama finally crossed the Indian Ocean, having travelled round the Cape of Good Hope, and anchored off the coast of Malabar in 1498. For the first time an invasion had come not from the northern passes but from the sea, and from then onwards the pattern of Indian history is intimately tied to the command of the sea and the Europeans who fought each other for it.

During the Middle Ages, supplies of silk, precious stones, cloves and, above all, pepper, had reached Europe overland through Kabul, Balkh, and Samarkand. The place of pepper and other spices in the European economy and the lack of control over deliveries, particularly after the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, were among the principal incentives for the Portuguese navigators. When da Gama, on landing at Calicut, was asked what he came for, he replied 'Christians and spices.' On da Gama's return home, the Portuguese sent a second expedition which was

established at Cochin. The Sultan of Egypt, realizing his share of a profitable monopoly was in danger, combined with local rulers; but their fleets were destroyed by the Portuguese.

The trading situation in India on the arrival of the Portuguese was as follows. Indian traders exported in Indian ships—cotton goods and so on—to the great entrepôt of Malacca in the Malayan Straits, where they were exchanged for spices, silks, and other products. Some of these goods were for Indian outlets, but they were mainly for onward shipment to the ports of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. The forwarding agents, mainly Arabs and Egyptians, controlled this lucrative trade and exerted considerable influence, as the wealth of many petty kingdoms was dependent not only on transit trade but on the continuing sale of pepper grain in their territories. The real conflict in India was between these Muslim middle-men with a profitable monopoly, and the Portuguese. The Indian trader merely welcomed the latter as additional customers.

But simple merchanting was neither to the taste nor the missionary preoccupations of the Portuguese. They realized that as a small nation it was impossible for them to conquer and hold large territories surrounded by hostile powers; but the sea battles they fought revealed naval opposition to be minor, and their defeat of the Egyptian fleet in 1509 gave them mastery of the sea. Alfonso de Albuquerque, who was Governor in the East from 1509 to his death in 1515, laid the foundations of a new kind of empire, based on sea-power. His conception was simple—a fleet of ships to which there was little or no opposition, a number of forts to protect trading-posts, and a central base as headquarters for his navy, his warehouses, and his churches.

In 1509 Albuquerque acquired Ormuz at the north of the Persian Gulf; in 1510 Goa, a seaport in the territory of the Sultan of Bijapur which in the fourteenth century had belonged to the Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar; and in 1511, after heavy fighting, the town of Malacca, that great trading-centre for the rest of East Asia.

The capture of Goa had not been an easy task and Albuquerque's first attempt was defeated by Adil Shah of Bijapur. Firishta, the Muslim historian, has described it.

'In the year 915 [April 1509–April 1510] the Christians surprised the town of Goa, and put to death the governor with many mussulmauns. Upon intelligence of which, Adil Shah, with three thousand chosen men, Dekkanees and foreigners, marched with such expedition, that he came upon the Europeans unawares, retook the fort, and put many to death; but some made their escape in their ships out to sea.'

The Portuguese in India

145

The Portuguese, after capturing Diu which controlled the entrance to the Gulf of Cambay, now dominated the sea-routes. The Arab middle-men had no alternative but to leave.

Albuquerque permitted Hindus to practise their religion, but his attitude to the Muslims was ferocious. The extension of his string of forts brought the Portuguese into conflict with the Muslim sultanate of Gujarat, and its ruler, Bahadur Shah, was killed while on board a Portuguese vessel negotiating a treaty at Diu, in 1537.

The Portuguese established merchant settlements on the east coast in Bengal, and on the Coromandel coast, originally with the consent of the local rulers; later they fortified their settlements and governed themselves. Later still, during the decline of the Portuguese power in Goa, they even repudiated the Viceroy and became in some cases the headquarters of well-organized piracy.

The Portuguese brought very few of their women with them, and encouraged inter-marriage in the hope of producing self-supporting colonies. But wealth and luxury are the enemy of the pioneer, a palace is no ante-room to the tent. Faria y Sousa wrote 'Up to this time [the death of Albuquerque] the gentlemen had followed the dictates of true honour, esteeming their arms the greatest riches; from this time forward, they so wholly gave themselves up to trading, that those who ought to have been captains became merchants.'

In 1540 the Inquisition was established in Goa, and Hindus were forbidden to practise their religion. As a consequence of this, great numbers of Hindus left the territory.

The influence of the Portuguese was not very great. Apart from their attacks on Muslim powers, they did not interfere in local politics and rivalries. The Portuguese possessions were never considered as the nucleus of a physical empire, but as the advance posts of a spiritual one. Christian missionaries, including St Francis Xavier, travelled throughout Asia on their task of conversion. Their settlements were docks and shipbuilding yards, warehouses and offices, secular and religious. Control of the sea was a satisfactory substitute for territorial expansion, easier to dominate and less prodigal of precious lives.

One of the causes of the decline of Portuguese power in Asia may be found in the state of European politics. In 1580 Portugal lost her national independence and became subject to the bigoted rule of Philip II of Spain. The welfare and interest of her colonies in the East became subordinate to Spanish interests in South America. Meanwhile, too, the Dutch were in revolt against Spain, and looked outwards for new sources of strength and power. The English, after their defeat of the Spanish Armada, saw profit

both mercantile and political in their growing sea-power. It was these two maritime nations who were to be the true enemies of Portuguese pretensions in Asia.

Vasco da Gama at Calicut

The following account is taken from the *Roteiro da Viagem de Dom Vasco da Gama à Índia*, the personal diary of a member of the expedition, first published in Portugal in 1838. This translation is by E. G. Ravenstein (*A Journal of the First Voyage of Vasco da Gama*, Hakluyt Society, 1898).

The action of da Gama in taking a Hindu temple for a church, and mistaking what was probably an image of Kali for that of the Virgin Mary, does not imply that he was a fool. It does indicate, however, the especial views and preoccupations of the Portuguese and the nature of their conquest. The traditions of the existence of Christian communities in India were strong, and the Portuguese fully expected to find Christian kings awaiting them. They were further prepared by the discovery at Mombasa, on their way to India, of 'four vessels belonging to Indian Christians. When they came for the first time on board Paulo da Gama's ship, the captain-major being there at the time, they were shown an altar-piece representing Our Lady at the foot of the Cross, with Jesus Christ in her arms and the Apostles around her. When the Indians saw this picture they prostrated themselves, and as long as we were there they came to say their prayers in front of it, bringing offerings of cloves, pepper, and other things.' Why the Indians prostrated themselves is difficult to say, though it is possible that the child was mistaken for Krishna, who is frequently represented as a child. Even three months on the Malabar coast did not destroy da Gama's misconception, and the king of Portugal was informed of this momentous discovery. He was soon, however, to be disillusioned.

That night [May 20] we anchored two leagues from the city of Calicut, and we did so because our pilot mistook Capua, a town of that place, for Calicut. Still farther there is another town called Pandarani. We anchored about a league and a half from the shore. After we were at anchor, four boats approached us from the land, who asked of what nation we were. We told them and they then pointed out Calicut to us.

On the following day these same boats came again alongside, when the Captain-Major sent one of the convicts to Calicut, and those with whom he went took him to two Moors of Tunis, who could speak Castilian and Genoese. The first greeting that he received was in these words: 'May the Devil take thee! What brought you hither?' They asked what he sought so far away from home, and he told them that we came in search of Christians and spices. They said: 'Why does not the King of Castille, the King of France, or the Signoria of Venice send hither?' He said that the King of Portugal would not consent to their doing so, and they said he did the right thing. After this they

Vasco da Gama at Calicut

147

took him to their lodgings and gave him wheaten bread and honey. When he had eaten he returned to the ships, accompanied by one of the Moors, who was no sooner on board than he said these words: 'A lucky venture, a lucky venture! Plenty of rubies, plenty of emeralds! You owe great thanks to God, for having brought you to a country holding such riches!' We were greatly astonished to hear this talk, for we never expected to hear our language spoken so far away from Portugal.

The city of Calicut is inhabited by Christians. They are of tawny complexion. Some of them have big beards and long hair, whilst others clip their hair short or shave the head, merely allowing a tuft to remain on the crown as a sign that they are Christians. They also wear moustaches. They pierce the ears and wear much gold in them. They go naked down to the waist, covering their lower extremities with very fine cotton stuffs. But it is only the most respectable who do this, for the others manage as best they are able.

The women of this country, as a rule, are ugly, and of small stature. They wear jewels of gold round the neck, numerous bracelets on their arms, and rings set with precious stones on their toes. All these people are well disposed and apparently of mild temper. At first sight they seem covetous and ignorant.

When we arrived at Calicut, the King was fifteen leagues away. The Captain-Major sent two men to him with a message, informing him that an ambassador had arrived from the King of Portugal with letters and that if he desired it, he would take them to where the King then was.

The King presented the bearers of this message with much fine cloth. He sent word to the Captain bidding him welcome, saying that he was about to proceed to Calicut. As a matter of fact, he started at once with a large retinue.

A pilot accompanied our two men, with orders to take us to a place called Pandarani, below the place where we anchored at first. At this time we were actually at the front of the city of Calicut. We were told that the anchorage at the place to which we were to go was good, whilst at the place we were then it was bad, with a stony bottom, which was quite true; and, moreover, that it was necessary for the ships which came to this country to anchor there for the sake of safety. We ourselves did not feel comfortable, and the Captain-Major had no sooner received this royal message than he ordered the sails to be set, and we departed. We did not, however, anchor as near the shore as the King's pilot desired.

When we were at anchor, a message arrived informing the Captain-Major that the King was already in the city. At the same time the King sent a *bale* [officer], with other men of distinction, to Pandarani, to conduct the Captain-Major to where the King awaited him. This *bale* was like an *alcaide* [leader or governor, probably of the guard] and is always attended by two hundred men with swords and bucklers. As it was late when this message arrived, the Captain-Major deferred going.

On the following morning, which was Monday, May 28th, the Captain-Major set out to speak to the King, and took with him thirteen men, of whom I was one. We put on our best attire, placed bombards in our boats, and took with us trumpets and many

flags. On landing, the Captain-Major was received by the *alcaide*, with whom were many men, armed and unarmed. The reception was friendly, as if the people were pleased to see us, though at first appearances looked threatening, for they carried naked swords in their hands. A palanquin was provided for the Captain-Major, such as is used by men of distinction in that country, as also by some of the merchants, who pay something to the King for this privilege. The Captain-Major entered the palanquin, which was carried by six men by turns. Attended by all these people, we took the road to Calicut, and came first to another town called Capua. The Captain-Major was there deposited at the house of a man of rank, whilst we others were provided with food, consisting of rice, with much butter, and excellent boiled fish. The Captain-Major did not wish to eat, and when we had done so, we embarked on a river close by, which flows between the sea and the mainland, close to the coast. The two boats in which we embarked were lashed together, so that we were not separated. There were numerous other boats, all crowded with people. As to those on the banks I say nothing; their number was infinite, and they had all come to see us. We went up that river for about a league, and saw many large ships drawn up high and dry on its banks, for there is no port there.

When we disembarked, the Captain-Major once more entered his palanquin. The road was crowded with a countless multitude anxious to see us. Even the women came out of their houses with children in their arms and followed us.

When we arrived at Calicut they took us to a large church, and this is what we saw:

The body of the church is as large as a monastery, all built of hewn stone and covered with tiles. At the main entrance rises a pillar of bronze as high as a mast, on the top of which was perched a bird, apparently a cock. In addition to this, there was another pillar as high as a man and very stout. In the centre of the body of the church rose a chapel, all built of hewn stone, with a bronze door sufficiently wide for a man to pass, and stone steps leading up to it. Within this sanctuary stood a small image which they said represented Our Lady. Along the walls, by the main entrance, hung seven small bells. In this church the Captain-Major said his prayers and we with him.

We did not go within the chapel, for it is the custom that only certain servants of the church should enter. These servants wore some threads passing over the left shoulder and under the right arm [the sacred thread of the Brahmins] in the same manner as our deacons wear the stole. They threw holy water over us, and gave us some white earth, which the Christians of this country are in the habit of putting on their foreheads, breasts, around the neck, and on the forearms. They threw holy water on the Captain-Major and gave him some of the earth, which he gave in charge of someone, giving them to understand that he would put it on later.

Many other saints were painted on the walls of the Church, wearing crowns. They were painted variously, with teeth protruding an inch from the mouth, and four or five arms.

Below this church there was a large masonry tank, similar to many others which we had seen along the road.

After we had left that place, and had arrived at the entrance to the city of Calicut, we were shown another church where we saw things like those described above. Here the crowd grew so dense that progress along the street became next to impossible, and for this reason they put the Captain into a house, and us with him.

The King sent a brother of the *bale*, who was a lord of this country, to accompany the Captain, and he was attended by men beating drums, blowing *anafils* and bagpipes, and firing off matchlocks. In conducting the Captain they showed us much respect, more than is shown in Spain to a king. The number of people was countless, for in addition to those who surrounded us, and among whom there were two thousand armed men, they crowded the roofs and the houses.

The farther we advanced in the direction of the King's palace, the more did they increase in number. And when we arrived there, men of much distinction and great lords came out to meet the Captain, and joined those who were already in attendance upon him. It was then an hour before sunset. When we reached the palace we passed through a gate into a courtyard of great size, and before we arrived at where the King was, we passed four doors, through which we had to force our way, giving many blows to the people. When, at last, we reached the door where the King was, there came forth from it a little old man, who holds a position resembling that of a bishop, and whose advice the King acts upon in all affairs of the church. This man embraced the Captain when he entered the door. Several men were wounded at this door, and we only got in by the use of much force.

The King was in a small court, reclining upon a couch covered with cloth of green velvet, above which was a good mattress, and upon this again a sheet of cotton stuff, very white and fine, more so than any linen. The cushions were after the same fashion. In his left hand the King held a very large golden cup, having a capacity of eight pints. At its mouth this cup was sixteen inches wide, and apparently it was massive. Into this cup the King threw the husks of a certain herb which is chewed by the people of this country because of its soothing effects, and which they call *atambor* [betel]. On the right side of the King stood a basin of gold, so large that a man might just encircle it with his arms: this contained the herbs. There were likewise many silver jugs. The canopy above the couch was all gilt.

The Captain, on entering, saluted in the manner of the country: by putting the hands together, then raising them towards heaven, as is done by Christians when addressing God, and immediately afterwards opening them and shutting the fists quickly. The King beckoned to the Captain with his right hand to come nearer, but the Captain did not approach him, for it is the custom of the country for no man to approach the King except only the servant who hands him the herbs, and when anyone addresses the King he holds the hand before the mouth, and remains at a distance. When the King beckoned the Captain he looked at us others, and ordered us to be seated on a stone bench near him, where he could see us. He ordered that water for our hands should be given us, as also some fruit, one kind of which resembled a melon, except that its outside was rough,

and the inside sweet, and another kind of fruit resembled a fig, and tasted very nice. There were men who prepared these fruits for us; and the King looked at us eating and smiled; and talked to the servant who stood near him supplying him with the herbs referred to.

Then, throwing his eyes on the Captain, who sat facing him, he invited him to address himself to the courtiers present, saying they were men of much distinction, that he could tell them whatever he desired to say, and they would repeat it to him, the King. The Captain-Major replied that he was the ambassador of the King of Portugal, and the bearer of a message which he could only deliver to him personally. The King said this was good, and immediately asked him to be conducted to a chamber. When the Captain-Major had entered, the King, too, rose and joined him, while we remained where we were. All this happened about sunset. An old man who was in the court took away the couch as soon as the King arose, but allowed the plate to remain. The King, when he joined the Captain, threw himself upon another couch, covered with various stuffs embroidered in gold, and asked the Captain what he wanted.

The Captain told him he was the ambassador of a King of Portugal, who was the lord of many countries and the possessor of great wealth of every description, exceeding that of any king of these parts; that for a period of sixty years his ancestors had annually sent out vessels to make discoveries in the direction of India, as they knew that there were Christian kings there like themselves. This, he said, was the reason which induced them to order this country to be discovered, not because they sought for gold or silver, for of this they had such abundance that they needed not what was to be found in this country. He further stated that the captains sent out travelled for a year or two, until their provisions were exhausted, and then returned to Portugal, without having succeeded in making the desired discovery. There reigned a king now whose name was Don Manuel, who had ordered him to build three vessels, of which he had been appointed Captain-Major, and who had ordered him not to return to Portugal until he should have discovered this king of the Christians, on pain of having his head cut off. That two letters had been entrusted to him, to be presented in case he succeeded in discovering him, and that he would do so on the ensuing day; and finally that he had been instructed to say by word of mouth that he, the King of Portugal, desired to be his friend and brother.

In reply to this the King said that he was welcome; that, on his part, he held him as a friend and brother, and would send ambassadors with him to Portugal. This latter had been asked as a favour, the Captain pretending that he would not dare to present himself before his King and master unless he was able to present, at the same time, some men of this country.

These and many other things passed between the two in this chamber, and as it was already late in the night, the King asked the Captain with whom he desired to lodge, with Christians or Moors? And the Captain replied, neither with Christians nor with Moors, and begged as a favour that he be given a lodging by himself. The King said he would order it thus, upon which the Captain took leave of the King and came to

Vasco da Gama at Calicut

151

where we were, that is, to a veranda lit up by a huge candle-stick. By that time four hours of the night had already gone.

We then all went forth with the Captain in search of our lodgings, and a countless crowd with us. And the rain poured down so heavily that the streets ran with water. The Captain went on the back of six men in a palanquin, and the time occupied in passing through the city was so long that the Captain at last grew tired, and complained to the King's factor, a Moor of distinction, who attended him to the lodgings. The Moor then took him to his own house, and we were admitted to a court within it, where there was a veranda roofed with tiles. Many carpets had been spread, and there were two large candle-sticks like those at the royal palace. At the top of each of these were great iron lamps, fed with oil or butter, and each lamp had four wicks, which gave much light. These lamps they use instead of torches.

This same Moor then had a horse brought for the Captain to take him to his lodgings, but it was without a saddle, and the Captain refused to mount it. We then started for our lodgings, and when we arrived we found there some of our men who had come from the ships with the Captain's bed, and with numerous other things which the Captain had brought as presents for the King.

The Empire of Akbar

I

POLITICAL EVENTS

THE REIGN OF AKBAR was one of the most decisive periods in the history of India: a period which is indelibly stamped with the personality of the Emperor. After a regency of six years as master only of a part of the Punjab, he died some fifty years later the ruler of all northern India.

The political history of his reign is reasonably straightforward and it would be well to examine it in some detail before discussing the character of Akbar and his administration.

The situation in northern India on the death of Humayun was complex. A terrible famine added its horrors to the precarious position of the new Emperor, at the same time as independent kingdoms—Kabul, governed by Akbar's half-brother, Kashmir, Sind, and Multan, Orissa, Malwa, and Gujarat—contended for power. To the south was the Vijayanagar Empire and the Muslim sultanates of Khandesh, Berar, Bidar, Ahmadnagar, and Golconda.

In November 1556, a decisive battle was fought at Panipat. Hemu, the Hindu minister of the Afghan claimant to the throne of Delhi, attacked the Mughal Governor of Delhi, occupied the city and declared himself king under the title of Raja Vikramaditya. Akbar and his guardian, Bairam Khan, advanced against him and Hemu was defeated at Panipat. Resistance hereafter was slight and Agra, Delhi, Ajmer, and Gwalior were garrisoned by Mughal forces.

Occupation of the fortress of Gwalior made the annexation of Malwa a fairly simple matter, and this was achieved in 1561. In 1562, Akbar had assumed personal control of his heritage by removing the regent Bairam Khan, and his successors, Akbar's foster-mother Maham Anaga, and her son Adham Khan.

Akbar now turned his attention to the Rajputana. By treaty and conquest the territory was annexed or neutralized under friendly, or at least loyal, Hindu rulers, though certain areas remained in opposition. Gujarat was annexed in 1572, ensuring for the new empire an outlet to the sea. The conquest of Bihar followed in 1574 and the campaign in Bengal ended with

the defeat of its Afghan ruler in 1576 and the annexation of part of the country, for it was some time before isolated opposition was finally crushed.

Akbar was now compelled to turn his attention to the north-west, where his half-brother, Muhammad Hakim, who governed Kabul as an independent ruler, was conspiring against him with discontented officers of Akbar's court. On the approach of the Emperor's forces (about 50,000 cavalry, 500 elephants, and a large number of infantry) Muhammad Hakim fled without making any opposition and was later defeated (August 1581). Akbar restored his half-brother to the throne and returned to Delhi. On the death of Muhammad Hakim in 1585, Kabul was annexed.

In 1586, Kashmir was also brought under the rule of Delhi, Sind in 1590-1, and Baluchistan in 1595. By the latter year, Akbar was the unquestioned ruler of most of northern India from the Hindu Kush to the Brahmaputra and from the Himalayas to the Narbada. Akbar now turned towards the south. His aim had the same imperial pretensions as those of his predecessors, the Mauryas, the Guptas, and the Turks; to create an all-India Empire. But Akbar also wished to push out the Portuguese whom he clearly saw as an economic threat and a political menace.

The Muslim sultanates of the Deccan were in decline, exhausting their strength in futile quarrels amongst themselves. Berar was occupied in 1596, Khandesh in 1600, and the city of Ahmadnagar in the same year. The kingdom, however, was not annexed until the reign of Shah Jahan. The conquered territories were organized into a Viceroyalty but were never properly administered and remained very much a partly pacified and garrisoned frontier area.

Akbar's intention of continuing the move south against Bijapur and Golconda was frustrated by the rebellion of his son, Jahangir, and the Emperor died in 1605 without extending the Empire further.

Akbar Secures the Throne

The author of the following description of the first days of Akbar's reign was Muhammad Kasim Hindu Shah, called Firishta, who was born at Astrabad on the Caspian Sea about 1570. In 1589 he took service at the court of Ibrahim Adil Shah II of Bijapur, and there wrote his *History of the Muhammadan Power in India*, a scrupulously fair and unbiased account free from sycophancy. It is our chief authority up to the year 1612.

The account of Akbar's reign is based partly on Firishta's personal knowledge, but mainly upon the *Akbarnama* of Abul Fazl and the *Tabakat-i-Akbari* of Nizam-ud-din Ahmad—both of whom were in intimate contact with Akbar. The translation used here was made by Colonel J. Briggs in 1829.

Abul Fazl relates, that when Humayun became insensible after his fall, the Mughal chiefs dispatched Ali Kuli Khan express to Punjab, to acquaint his son Akbar of the accident. This information reached the Prince in a few days at the town of Kalanur. The officers who were present, after expressing their grief for the deceased, raised Akbar to the throne, on the 2nd of Rabbi-us-sani, in the year 963 [15 February, 1556], when he was only thirteen years and nine months old.

Bairam Khan, Turkoman, distinguished by the title of Khan Khanan, became his minister, and had the whole civil and military power vested in his hands.

[Tardi Beg Khan dispatched all the ensigns of royalty from Delhi, and letters of congratulation were addressed to the young King by Ali Kuli Khan, Governor of Sambal, Sikandar Khan Usbeg, Governor of Agra, Bahadur Khan, Governor of Dipalpur, and Mun'im Khan, tutor to Muhammad Hakim Mirza—brother to the King—and Governor of Kabul. The King then led his army to the hills to attack Sikandar Shah Sur, and having defeated him and compelled him to fly within the recesses of the mountains, took up his quarters for the rainy season at Jalandhar.]

In the meantime, Suleiman Mirza, who had been left Governor of Badakshan, throwing off his allegiance, marched against Kabul, which was defended by Mun'im Khan. Intelligence of this insurrection having reached Akbar, he detached Muhammad Kuli Birlas [with other officers] to succour Mun'im Khan. Some of these chiefs entered Kabul, while others, encamping without the city, harassed the besiegers for the space of four months, when the garrison being at length worn out for want of provisions, Mun'im Khan was compelled to suffer the *Kutbah* to be read in the name of Suleiman Mirza, who then raised the siege and returned to Badakshan.

During these transactions, Hemu, the vizier of Muhammad Shah Adil, advancing toward Agra with thirty thousand horse and foot, and two thousand elephants, obliged Sikandar Khan Usbeg to retreat to Delhi; while Shadi Khan, another of Shah Adil's generals, advanced with an army to the banks of the Rohat, where Ali Kuli Khan, who had received the title of Khan Zaman, opposed him with three thousand horse; but the latter was defeated with so severe a loss, that only two hundred of his men escaped from the field of battle, many of whom were drowned in the river.

Hemu, elated with this intelligence, laid siege to Agra, and having reduced it, proceeded to Delhi. Tardi Beg Khan, the governor, seized with consternation, sent expresses to all the Mughal chiefs in the neighbourhood to come to his aid. Shortly after, being joined by [several of these], he conceived himself in a condition to give the enemy battle, without waiting for Khan Zaman, who by this time had obtained a considerable reinforcement, and was on his march to Delhi. Tardi Beg Khan accordingly moved to meet the enemy. Hemu selected three thousand horse and some of his best elephants which he retained near his own person in the centre, and during the heat of the battle he charged Tardi Beg Khan with such impetuosity, that he compelled him to quit the field. The right wing of the Mughals was routed, the flight became general, and the city of Delhi also surrendered. Tardi Beg Khan fled to Sirhind, leaving the whole country

open to the enemy. Khan Zaman, hearing of this disaster at Meerut, avoided Delhi and proceeded to Nowshera, on his way to join the King, who, during these transactions, was at Jalandhar, and finding all his dominions, except the Punjab, wrested from him, was perplexed how to act. At length, feeling diffident of himself both from his youth and inexperience, he conferred on Bairam Khan, Turkoman, the title of Khan Baba [protector], and reposing his whole trust in the prudence and wisdom of that chief, begged him to take measures for retrieving his affairs. At the same time, he assured him, in the most solemn manner, that he would pay no attention to any malicious accusations against him. The young King also required Bairam Khan to swear, on his part, by the soul of his deceased father Humayun, and by the head of his own son, that he would be faithful to his trust.

After this, a council being called by Bairam Khan, the majority of the officers were of opinion, that as the enemy's force consisted of more than a hundred thousand horse, while the royal army could scarcely muster twenty thousand, it would be prudent to retreat to Kabul. Bairam Khan not only opposed this measure, but was almost singular in his opinion that the King ought instantly to give battle to the enemy. The voice of Akbar, which was in unison with the sentiments of Bairam Khan, decided the question. Hostilities being determined on, Khizr Khan, who was then governor of Lahore, was directed to attack Sikandar Shah Sur; while the King proceeded to march in person against Hemu.

On reaching Nowshera, he was joined by several of his defeated officers who had assembled at that place. During his stay there, Bairam Khan, taking advantage of the King's absence from camp on a hunting party, caused Tardi Beg Khan to be seized and beheaded for abandoning Delhi, where he might have defended himself. When Akbar returned, Bairam Khan waited on him, and acquainted him with what he had done, at the same time excusing himself for not consulting the King, as he felt certain his clemency was such, that, notwithstanding Tardi Beg Khan's misconduct, he would have pardoned him. Bairam Khan remarked, that lenity at such a crisis would lead to dangerous consequences, as the only hope left to the Mughals, at the present moment, depended on every individual exerting himself to the utmost of his power.

The King felt obliged to approve of this severe measure. The author of this work has understood, from the best informed men of the times, that had Tardi Beg Khan not been executed by way of example, such was the condition of the Mughal army, and the general feeling of those foreigners, that the old scene of Sher Shah would have been acted over again. But in consequence of this prompt though severe measure, the Chatagai officers, each of whom before esteemed himself at least equal to Kaikobad and Kaikaos, now found it necessary to conform to the orders of Bairam Khan, and to submit quietly to his authority.

Soon after this event, the army marched from Nowshera towards Delhi. [The advance guard was placed under the command of Khan Zaman, who was created *Sarlasbkar* or commander-in-chief.] Hemu, who had now assumed the title of Raja Vikramaditya in

Delhi, marched out of the capital to meet the King, with an army as numerous as the locusts and ants of the desert. His advance guard, consisting of Afghans with some artillery, having fallen in with the Mughal *Sarlashkar*, was routed with the loss of all its guns, an event which proved of great importance to Akbar. Hemu, however, reached Panipat without further opposition; and hearing that the King was near, he distributed his elephants, in which he greatly confided, among his principal officers, and waited an attack.

On the morning of the 2nd of Muharram, 964 [5 November 1556], the *Sarlashkar* having halted was joined by the whole army, except a few select troops who remained to guard the King's person, and drawing up, offered battle. Hemu began the action with his elephants, in hopes of alarming the enemy's cavalry, unaccustomed to those animals; but the Mughals attacked them so furiously, after they had penetrated even to the centre of the army, where Khan Zaman commanded, that, galled with lances, arrows, and javelins, they became quite unruly, and disdaining the control of their drivers, turned and threw the Afghan ranks into confusion. Hemu, mounted on an elephant of prodigious size, still continued the action with great bravery, at the head of four thousand horse, in the very heart of the Mughal army; but being pierced through the eye with an arrow, he sank into his howdah from extreme agony. The greater part of his troops feared his wound was mortal, and forsook him. Raising himself again, Hemu drew the arrow and with it the eye out of the socket, which he wrapt in his handkerchief, and in spite of his painful situation, continued to fight with unabated courage, endeavouring, with the few men who remained about his person, to force his retreat through the enemy's line. At length, Ali Kuli Khan levelled his lance against the driver of Hemu's elephant, who, in order to save his own life, pointed to his master, and promised Ali Kuli Khan to guide the elephant wherever he directed. He was now surrounded by a body of horse, and carried prisoner to Akbar, who was about two or three *kos* in the rear. When Hemu was brought into the presence, Bairam Khan recommended the King to do a meritorious act by killing the infidel with his own hand. Akbar, in order to fulfil the wish of his minister, drew his sword, and touching the head of the captive became entitled to the appellation of *Ghazi*, while Bairam Khan, drawing his own sabre, at a single blow severed the head of Hemu from his body.

During this action, fifteen hundred elephants fell into the hands of Akbar, who, marching from Panipat, entered Delhi without opposition. [He had barely reached the capital, however, when news was brought that Khizr Khan, who had been left in charge of the operations in the Punjab, had been defeated by Sikandar Shah, and obliged to fly to Lahore. On hearing this, Akbar again put his army in motion and marched towards the Punjab, whereupon Sikandar Shah Sur, who had advanced as far as Kalanur, retreated to the fort of Mankot.]

At this place Akbar encamped for the space of three months, during which time the King's mother, and other ladies of the seraglio, together with several of the families of the Chatagai chiefs, returned from Kabul. They were escorted by the officer who had

been sent to afford aid to Mun'im Khan; but Muhammad Hakim Mirza, with his mother and sister, remained at Kabul by the King's orders. The former was formally invested by patent with the management of that country, under the tutelage of Mun'im Khan during his minority.

The siege of Mankot lasted for six months, when Sikandar Shah opened negotiations to surrender. Unable to attend the King owing to his wounds, he consented to evacuate the fort, and to cause his son, Shaikh Abdul Rahim, to enter the King's service and remain with him as a hostage for his own future forbearance from hostility, begging that he himself might be permitted to retire unmolested to Bengal. These terms being acceded to, Shaikh Abdul Rahim, in the month of Ramadan 964, was presented to the King, and made offerings of several elephants. Sikandar Shah retired to Bengal, and Mankot was delivered up to Akbar, who having left a trusty governor in the place, proceeded to Lahore [and thence by easy stages to Delhi, which was entered on the 25th of Jumadi-us-sani 965 A.H., or 9 April 1558].

II

THE CHARACTER OF AKBAR

There exist a number of descriptions of Akbar, but one of the most revealing is from the memoirs of that same son, Jahangir, who embittered the declining years of the Emperor.

'My father always associated with the learned of every creed and religion: especially the Pundits and the learned of India, and, although he was illiterate, so much became clear to him through constant intercourse with the learned and the wise, in his conversations with them, that no one knew him to be illiterate, and he was so well acquainted with the niceties of verse and prose compositions that his deficiency was not thought of. In his august personal appearance he was of middle height, but inclining to be tall; he was of the hue of wheat; his eyes and eyebrows were black, and his complexion rather dark than fair; he was lion-bodied with a broad chest, and his hands and arms long. On the left side of his nose he had a fleshy mole, very agreeable in appearance, of the size of half a pea. Those skilled in the science of physiognomy considered this mole a sign of great prosperity and exceeding good fortune. His august voice was very loud, and in speaking and explaining, had a peculiar richness. In his actions and movements he was not like the people of the world, and the Glory of God manifested itself in him. Notwithstanding his Kingship, his treasures and his buried wealth past computation, his fighting elephants and Arab horses, he never by a

hair's breadth placed his foot beyond the base of humility before the Throne of God, and never for one moment forgot Him. He associated with the good of every race and creed and persuasion, and was gracious to all in accordance with their condition and understanding. He passed his nights in wakefulness, and slept little in the day; the length of his sleep during a whole night and day was not more than a watch and a half. He counted his wakefulness at night as so much added to his life. His courage and boldness were such that he could mount raging, rutting elephants, and subdue to obedience murderous elephants which would not allow their own females near them. Of the austerities practised by my revered father one was not eating the flesh of animals. During three months of the year he ate meat, and for the remaining nine, contented himself with Sufi food and was in no way pleased with the slaughter of animals. On many days and in many months this was forbidden to the people.'

The character of Akbar is both fascinating and irritating. We know a great deal about what he did but very little about his motives. The Jesuits at his court often thought of him as a dissimulator because he often kept them guessing about his thoughts. Akbar was obviously avaricious for knowledge and the sweep of his interests ranged from theology to science, natural history to art, from sport to mechanics.

One aspect of Akbar's mind is clear. His attitude to religion was one of the most decisive determinants of his sometimes inexplicable actions—inexplicable that is, to those bigoted minds, Muslim and Christian, who sought to confine him within a web of orthodox religion.

Abul Fazl, whose *Ain-i-Akbari* or 'Institutes of Akbar' is one of the chief sources of information about Akbar, tells us:

'From early childhood, he had passed through the most diverse phases of religious practices and beliefs and had collected with a peculiar talent in selection all books that can teach, and thus there gradually grew in his mind the conviction that there were sensible men in all religions, and austere thinkers and men with miraculous gifts in all nations. If some truth were thus found everywhere, why should Truth be restricted to one religion or to a comparatively new creed like Islam, scarcely a thousand years old?'

Akbar in 1578 organized religious debates in a special building at his new capital of Fathpur Sikri. At first only Muslims took part but later, Hindus, Parsees, and Jains participated. In 1580 a Jesuit mission from Goa was invited, though the high hopes entertained by them for the conversion

of the Emperor were soon abandoned and the missionaries returned to Goa.

In 1582, Akbar devised a new faith of his own, the Din Ilahi ('Divine Faith'), the exact nature of which remains obscure. It was an eclectic creed, borrowing from the Hindus the sacred cow and other practices. There were, however, very few adherents outside court circles and on the death of Akbar no more is heard of it. Jesuit missions were often invited to the court and remained there for the last ten years of the Emperor's life. The Jesuits often thought him to be on the brink of conversion and were continually writing to Rome to announce its imminence, little realizing the extent of Akbar's intellectual curiosity and unwillingness to be tied to specific doctrine and dogma. Certainly in the last few years of Akbar's reign Muslim orthodoxy was out of favour.

Apart from Akbar's curiosity and his undoubted desire to find the secret of ultimate truth, his religious inquiry led to a wide tolerance of differing faiths. This too was part of his political ideas, as we shall see in a later chapter.

That Akbar was a political genius there is no doubt. For the first time, an invader looked to the stability and the loyalty of the conquered as the basis of his power. The expansion of his Empire was the result of deliberate policy and an undeterrable ambition. Very occasionally a period in history can be seen to be the creation of one man—the reign of Akbar is one of these. He died in 1605.

There is only one, apparently insignificant, incident that must be mentioned here. In 1585 there appeared at the court of Akbar three Englishmen, Ralph Fitch, John Newbery, and William Leedes, who had left England some two years previously bearing a letter from Queen Elizabeth. After shipwreck and other adventures, they had finally reached the Mughal capital where they were received by the Emperor. Leedes remained as a court jeweller, Newbery disappeared attempting to return to England by the overland route, and Fitch, after visiting Burma and Malacca, returned home after an absence of eight years. His experiences and the tales he had to tell inspired hard-headed English merchants to establish the East India Company.

Akbar—A European Portrait

As a supplement to the description of Akbar by his son and successor, Jahangir, here is a European view of the Emperor. It is taken from the *History of the most memorable things that took place in the East Indies and the countries discovered by the Portuguese*, by Father Pierre du Jarric, published in three parts at Bordeaux, in 1608,

1610, and 1614. The account of Akbar is contained in Part II (Book IV, Chap. 8). Du Jarric's account is based upon Father Monserrate's *Relaçam do Equebar, Roi des Mogares*. Monserrate was a Jesuit appointed to be tutor to Prince Murad in 1580; in the following year he accompanied the Emperor on his military expedition to Kabul. He was, as far as his religious prejudices allowed, an accurate observer, and his relations with Akbar were close.

It was in the year 1582 that his court was first visited by Fathers of the Company. He was then about forty years of age, of medium stature, and strongly built. He wore a turban on his head, and the fabric of his costume was interwoven with gold thread. His outer garment reached to his knees, and his breeches to his heels. His stockings were much like ours; but his shoes were of a peculiar pattern invented by himself. On his brow he wore several rows of pearls or precious stones. He had a great liking for European clothes; and sometimes it was his pleasure to dress himself in a costume of black velvet made after the Portuguese fashion; but this was only on private, not on public occasions. He had always a sword at his side, or at any rate so near by that he could lay his hand upon it in a moment. Those who guarded his person, and whom he kept constantly near him, were changed each day of the week, as were his other officers and attendants, but in such a manner that the same persons came on duty every eighth day.

Akbar possessed an alert and discerning mind; he was a man of sound judgment, prudent in affairs, and, above all, kind, affable, and generous. With these qualities he combined the courage of those who undertake and carry out great enterprises. He could be friendly and genial in his intercourse with others, without losing the dignity befitting the person of a king. He seemed to appreciate virtue, and to be well disposed towards foreigners, particularly Christians, some of whom he always liked to have about him. He was interested in, and curious to learn about many things, and possessed an intimate knowledge not only of military and political matters, but of many of the mechanical arts. He took delight in watching the casting of pieces of artillery, and in his own palace kept workmen constantly employed in the manufacture of guns and arms of various descriptions. In short, he was well informed on a great variety of subjects, and could discourse on the law of many sects, for this was a matter of which he made a special study. Although he could neither read nor write, he enjoyed entering into debate with learned doctors. He always entertained at his court a dozen or so of such men, who propounded many questions in his presence. To their discussions, now on one subject, now on another, and particularly to the stories which they narrated, he was a willing listener, believing that by this means he could overcome the disadvantage of his illiteracy.

Akbar was by temperament melancholy, and he suffered from the falling-sickness; so that to divert his mind, he had recourse to various forms of amusement, such as watching elephants fight together, or camels, or buffaloes, or rams that butt and prod each other with their horns, or even two cocks. He was also fond of watching fencing bouts; and on certain occasions, after the manner of the ancient Romans, he made

Akbar—A European Portrait

161

gladiators fight before him; or fencers were made to contend until one had killed the other. At other times, he amused himself with elephants and camels that had been trained to dance to the tune of certain musical instruments, and to perform other strange feats. But in the midst of all these diversions—and this is a very remarkable thing—he continued to give his attention to affairs of State, even to matters of grave importance.

Often he used to hunt the wild animals that abound in these regions. For this purpose, he employed panthers instead of hunting-dogs; for in this country panthers are trained to the chase as we train dogs. He did not care much for hawking, though he had many well-trained falcons and other birds of prey; and there were some expert falconers among his retainers. Some of these were so skilful with the bow that they very rarely missed a bird at which they shot, even though it was on the wing, and though their arrows were unfeathered.

To catch wild deer he used other deer, which had been trained for this purpose. These carried nets on their horns in which the wild deer that came to attack them became entangled, upon which they were seized by the hunters who lay in concealment near by. When on a military campaign, he used to hunt in the following manner. Four or five thousand men were made to join hands and form a ring round a piece of jungle. Others were then sent inside to drive the animals to the edge of the enclosure, where they were captured by those forming the ring. A fine was levied on those who allowed an animal to break through and escape.

So much for the King's recreations. We will now turn to more serious matters. That any person might be able to speak to him on business of importance, Akbar appeared twice daily in public, to give audience to all classes of his subjects. For this purpose he made use of two large halls of his palace, in each of which was placed on a raised dais a splendid and costly throne. To the first of these halls all his subjects had access, and there he listened to all who sought speech with him. But to the second, none was admitted but the captains and great nobles of his kingdom, and the ambassadors who came from foreign kings to confer with him on affairs of importance. Eight experienced officers, whose judgment he could trust, were in constant attendance on him. Amongst these he apportioned the days of the week, so that each had his special day for introducing those who desired an audience. It was their duty to examine the credentials of all such persons, and to act as masters of ceremony, instructing them, more especially if they were foreigners, how to make reverence to the King, and how to comport themselves in his presence; for on these occasions much ceremony is observed, it being the custom, among other things, to kiss the feet of the King on saluting him. When giving audience, the King is also attended by a number of secretaries, whose duty it is to record in writing every word he speaks. This is a custom much practised by the princes of Persia, and other Eastern countries.

For the administration of justice, there are magistrates whose judgment is final, and others from whom there is an appeal. In every case the proceedings are verbal, and are never committed to writing.

The King of whom we are speaking made it his particular care that in every case justice should be strictly enforced. He was, nevertheless, cautious in the infliction of punishments, especially the punishment of death. In no city where he resided could any person be put to death until the execution warrant had been submitted to him, some say, as many as three times. His punishments were not, ordinarily, cruel; though it is true that he caused some who had conspired against his life to be slain by elephants, and that he sometimes punished criminals by impalement after the Turkish fashion. A robber or sea-pirate, if he had killed no one, suffered the loss of a hand; but murderers, highwaymen, and adulterers were either strangled or crucified, or their throats were cut according to the gravity of their crimes. Lesser offenders were whipped and set free. In brief, the light of clemency and mildness shone forth from this prince, even upon those who had offended against his own person. He twice pardoned an officer high in his service, who had been convicted of treason and conspiracy, graciously restoring him to favour and office. But when the same officer so far forgot himself as to repeat his offence a third time, he sentenced him to death by crucifixion.

Akbar seldom lost his temper. If he did so, he fell into a violent passion; but his wrath was never of long duration. Before engaging in any important undertaking, he used to consult the members of his council; but he made up his own mind, adopting whatever course seemed to him the best. Sometimes he communicated his intentions to his councillors to ascertain their views. If they approved, they would answer with the words 'Peace be to our lord the King'. If anyone expressed an adverse opinion, Akbar would listen patiently, answer his objections, and point out the reasons for his own decision. Sometimes, in view of the objections pointed out to him, he changed the plans he had made. Persian is the language usually spoken at his court, but learned men and priests of Mahomet speak Arabic.

This is what we have been able to ascertain about the Great Mughal and his State.

The Mughal Empire at its Zenith

I

JAHANGIR

A STUDY OF AKBAR'S administration and its political, social, and economic results will be left for a separate chapter so that, while examining it and the treatment it received at the hands of his successors, it will be possible to assess the nature and significance of Mughal rule from fulfilment to collapse.

For the reign of Akbar's successor, Jahangir ('World-Grasper'), there is ample contemporary material. The Emperor wrote his own very revealing memoirs, and there are many descriptions from European travellers. At the beginning of his reign Jahangir had made many promises of reform, but few were carried out and his eldest son, Khusru, a popular hero, attempted a rebellion. Khusru, who appears to have been of unusually attractive character, was defeated, partially blinded, and kept as a State prisoner until his murder in 1622. The rebellion was crushed with great ferocity.

In the early years of his reign Jahangir, despite a promise to restore Muslim orthodoxy, again invited the Jesuits to his court and religious discussions were resumed. The Jesuits once again believed in the imminent conversion of the Emperor to Christianity. In 1609 an Englishman, William Hawkins, arrived at Agra, having been sent by the newly founded East India Company to request permission to establish a trading-post at Surat. Hawkins, who could speak Turki, was welcomed by the Emperor as a friend. Hawkins has left a description of the life of Jahangir.

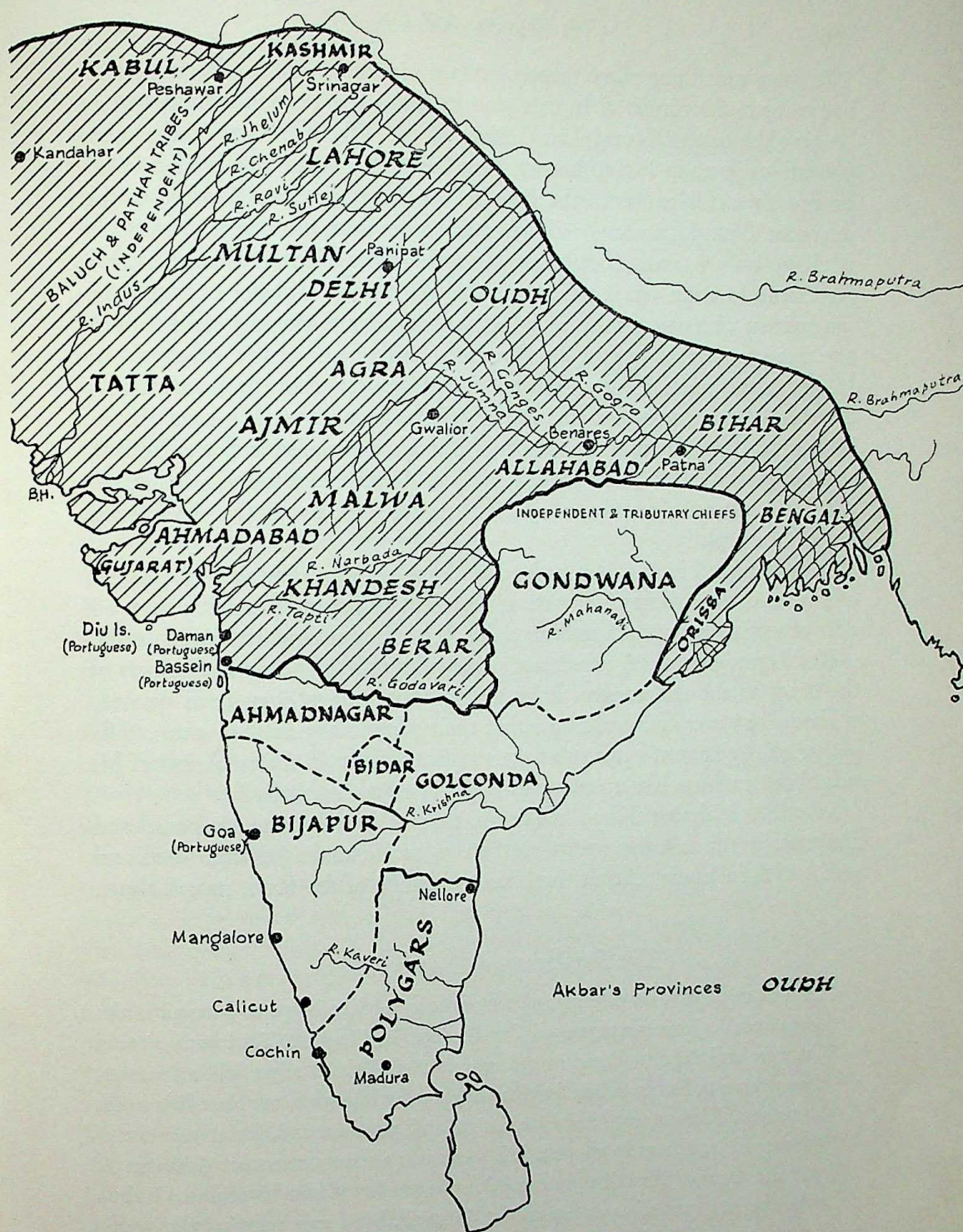
'First in the morning about the break of day he is at his beads with his face turned to the westward. The manner of his praying when he is in Agra is in a private fair room, upon a goodly jet stone, having only a Persian lamb-skin under him; having also some eight chains of beads, every one containing four hundred. At the upper end of this jet stone the pictures of Our Lady and Christ are placed, graven in stone; so he turneth over his beads and saith 3,200 words, according to the number of his beads, and then his prayer is ended. After he hath done, he sheweth himself to the people, receiving their salaams or good-morrows; unto

whom multitudes resort every morning for this purpose. This done, he sleepeth two hours more, and then dineth, and passeth his time with his women; and at noon he showeth himself to the people again, sitting till three of the clock, viewing and seeing his pastimes and sports made by men and fighting of many sorts of beasts, every day sundry kinds of pastimes.

'Then at three of the clock all the nobles in general [that be in Agra and are well], resort unto the court, the King coming forth in open audience, sitting in his seat royal, and every man standing in this degree before him, his chiefest sort of nobles standing within the red rail and the rest without. They are all placed by his lieutenant-general. This red rail is three steps higher than the place where the rest stand; and within this red rail I was placed, among the chiefest of them all. The rest are placed by officers, and they likewise be within another very spacious place railed; and without that rail stand all sorts of horsemen and soldiers that belong unto his captains and all other comers. At these rails there are many doors kept by many porters, who have white rods to keep men in order. In the midst of the place, right before the King, standeth one of his sheriffs, together with the master hangman, who is accompanied by forty hangmen, wearing on their heads a certain quilted cap different from all others, with a hatchet on their shoulders; and others with all sorts of whips being there ready to do what the King commandeth. The King heareth all causes in this place and stayeth some two hours every day.

'Then he departeth towards his private place of prayer; his prayer being ended, four or five sorts of very well dressed and roasted meats are brought him, of which as he pleaseth he eateth a bit to stay his stomach, drinking once of his strong drink. Then he cometh forth into a private room, where none can come but such as himself nominateth [for two years I was one of his attendants there]. In this place he drinketh other three cupfuls, which is the portion that the physicians allot him. This done, he eateth opium, and then he ariseth, and being in the height of his drink, he layeth him down to sleep, every man departing to his own home. And after he hath slept two hours they awake him and bring his supper to him; at which time he is not able to feed himself; but it is thrust into his mouth by others; and this is about one of the clock; and then he sleepeth the rest of the night.'

Hawkins lasted two and a half years at court, drawing a large salary and solaced by an Armenian girl from the royal harem. In 1616, however, the Emperor tiring of him, he left for England but died on the voyage.



THE MUGHAL EMPIRE IN 1605

In 1611 something more important than an exotic drinking companion had come to the Emperor. In that year, he married a Persian wife to whom he gave the title of Nur Jahan ('Light of the World'). One of the most powerful women in Indian history, Nur Jahan, her father and brother, soon became the actual rulers of the Empire. As Jahangir himself wrote in the memoirs: 'Nur Jahan was wise enough to conduct the business of State' while he 'only wanted a bottle of wine and a piece of meat to make merry.' Her administration was a selfish one and the Empire did not expand. An intermittent war was continued in Ahmadnagar and the only campaign of any importance was against the Rana of Mewar, who at last submitted to Mughal supremacy. Under Nur Jahan and her relations the State services deteriorated and corruption was rife. Factions appeared, and in 1622 Prince Khurram rebelled against the Emperor, but was compelled to flee to Bengal.

Jahangir was indolent and pleasure-loving. A cultured man and a drunkard, cruel and a lover of nature. It would almost be true to say that he reigned but did not rule.

In 1615, Sir Thomas Roe arrived at Agra as the ambassador of James I of England. Roe spent four years at the court of Jahangir and left in 1619 after obtaining substantial trading rights. The English had arrived in India.

Roe kept a journal. A wise man, he saw through the pomp and luxury of the court to the real tension behind. His words have often been quoted, without, however, diminishing either their perspicacity or their truth. 'His [Jahangir's] greatness substantially is not in itself but in the weakness of his neighbours, whom like an overgrown pike he feeds on as fry.'

In 1626, Mahabat Khan made an attempt to seize the Emperor and Empress. In the following year, on the way to Kashmir, Jahangir died and was buried in a magnificent tomb on the banks of the Ravi, near Lahore.

The Punishment of Prince Khusru

This description of the rebellion of one of the sons of the Emperor Jahangir is also taken from du Jarric (see page 159), Part II, Book V, Chap. 16. The breach between Jahangir and Khusru began in the last years of Akbar's reign, when Jahangir, then known as Prince Salim, feared an attempt by Khusru to supplant him in the succession. Khusru was handsome, brave, and generous, and, for at least one of these qualities, extremely popular. His revolt was a serious menace to Jahangir. A year after the events described below, Khusru was released from his chains at Kabul, where he had been taken in the train of Jahangir. But a new conspiracy, in which Khusru was said to be involved, was discovered and he was taken back to Agra and blinded—though apparently not permanently so. In 1620 Khusru was released into the custody of his brother, the future Shah Jahan.

The Punishment of Prince Khusru

167

Having arrived at the fortress where the Prince was, the captain, without showing him any marks of respect or courtesy, produced fetters, covered with velvet, with which he had been supplied, and said that he was commanded by the King to put them on his feet. Having thus secured him, he led him away, under a strong guard, together with those who were prisoners with him. On their return, the King sent an elephant, meanly harnessed, to carry the Prince across the river, and ordered him to be brought to the pleasure-house where he then was; for he had not yet made his entry into the town. On learning of his arrival, he withdrew into the house, perchance to give way to the natural feeling of a father, as did Joseph on the arrival of his brethren; but in a little while he came out, and ordered him to approach.

The whole court awaited in suspense the sentence of the King. The spectacle of the poor Prince, chained hand and foot, being led into his father's presence, moved all who witnessed it to compassion. As soon as he saw the King, he began, even from afar, to make signs of submission and reverence. The King made him come near, and bade him take his place among the captains and courtiers who were present. Then, turning on him a countenance full of anger, he reprimanded him in the most piercing terms. The two captains who had been of his party, were also made to come before him, one of whom had been a distinguished captain under his father, whom he had served in divers great affairs; while the other had been his Treasurer, and governor of the city of Lahore. As these two stood before him, heavily manacled, he spoke mockingly to them of the king they had chosen, and of the captains chosen by their king to aid him in his brilliant exploit.

In brief, and to bring the drama to a close, the King made over the Prince to one of his captains, with orders that he was to be rigorously guarded, and that the chains were not to be removed from his feet. As to the two captains, the foremost, having been stripped naked, was enveloped in the skin of a newly slaughtered ox; and the other, the Treasurer, having likewise been stripped, was arrayed in the skin of an ass, also newly slain for the purpose. The skins were sewn tightly over them, so that as they gradually dried and shrank, they might become tighter and tighter, and so put them to torture. They remained thus the whole night; and in the morning were paraded through the city, clad in the manner described, the one having the horns of an ox on his head, and the other the ears of an ass, these being attached to the skins which they wore. Each of them was made to ride upon an ass, his face turned towards the tail.

Their punishment filled the people with amazement; for how different was this from the last occasion when they had seen them ride, richly attired and superbly mounted, through this same town of Lahore. When they returned to the pleasure-house where the King was, the captain was so overcome by the ignominy to which he had been exposed in the streets, where he had formerly gone in State, with his elephants, and horses, and retainers, that he had no strength even to stand, and fell to the ground as one dead. The King gave orders that his head should be cut off and sent to Agra, to be fixed to the gate of the city. His body he ordered to be cut up into four quarters, and fixed to poles

which were to be set up on the highways, as a fearful warning to any one who should contemplate similar evil practices.

The Treasurer was left sewn up in his case; but the King, as a great favour, gave permission that his servant might moisten the skin on the outside, so that it should grip him less severely. But he had to pay dearly for any relief that this afforded him; for the moisture engendered fleas and other vermin, so that his tortures were worse than before, and he accounted himself happy when he could crush some of them in his fingers. In addition, the skin began to putrefy with the heat of the sun, and gave off such an evil smell, that none would come near him. In the end, however, the King graciously pardoned him, being desirous of marrying him to one of his daughters, for which honour he was to pay his majesty over a hundred thousand crowns. On the same evening that he paid this sum, he was unsewn, and taken to the city; and in a few days he began to go about as before. Eventually having regained the King's good graces, he was reinstated in his former office.

Many of the soldiers who had followed the Prince had also been captured; and on the day that the King made his entry into the town, two hundred of these captives decorated his route, on either side of which they had been, by his orders, either impaled or hanged. Amongst these were many who were related to his chief favourites; but none dared open his lips on their behalf, lest he should be accounted a partisan of the Prince. The march to the city was a sort of triumph. As the King, mounted on a magnificently caparisoned elephant, passed along the route, he turned his head from side to side to regard his victims, listening to what was told him of each. A little behind came the Prince, the fetters still on his feet, and mounted on a small elephant, devoid of harness or trappings.

After entering the town, the King confined the Prince in his palace. He still kept him in chains, though of a somewhat lighter description than before. Soon afterwards he took away from him, and transferred to his second son, his titles and his princely rank, utterly degrading him, and depriving him of his right to succeed to the throne. A hundred thousand crowns came to the King through the captain whose head he had cut off, and another large sum through the other offenders. All this he kept for himself; but the horses, and other things that he took from his son, he bestowed on those whom the Prince regarded as his greatest enemies; and this he did to render his vexation the more acute. Thus God chastises, in this life, the children who rebel against their fathers.

II

SHAH JAHAN

The death of Jahangir was followed by a period of intrigue. Two candidates for the throne, Khurram, now called Shah Jahan, and his brother Shahriyar disputed the succession, though the intrigues that followed were mainly between the Dowager Empress Nur Jahan and her brother Asaf Khan—

for the latter's daughter was married to Shah Jahan and the former's (by her first husband) to Shahriyar. Shah Jahan was recalled from the Deccan by Asaf Khan who, in the meantime, had defeated and blinded Shahriyar. Shah Jahan had all but one of his relatives murdered, and Nur Jahan was banished; then Shah Jahan was proclaimed Emperor at Agra in 1628. His Empress, Mumtaz Mahal (the 'Jewel of the Palace') died in childbirth in 1631 and the result of the Emperor's grief is the superb monument of the Taj Mahal.

Shah Jahan, though half a Hindu (his mother was a Rajput princess) had none of the religious curiosity or tolerance of his two predecessors. Hindu temples in course of construction were destroyed and Christian churches at Agra and Lahore were razed to the ground.

In 1632, Shah Jahan attacked the Portuguese at Hugli, near present-day Calcutta, and captured it after three months' siege. The settlement had a monopoly in the mercantile trade of Bengal and the Emperor's intention was to eliminate such dangerous foreign control of imports.

In the south, Shah Jahan took up the unfulfilled plans of Akbar for the conquest of the Deccan. Bijapur was attacked in 1630 and Ahmadnagar was finally occupied, through treachery, in 1632. The campaign in Ahmadnagar saw the emergence of Maratha opposition, which was to be such a feature of the next reign, in the person of Shahji, father of the great chief Sivaji. Golconda submitted to Mughal rule, but the Sultan of Bijapur stood out until Shah Jahan returned to the Deccan in 1635. These two States, now tributaries of the Mughal Empire, turned their attention south to the Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar, but in 1656 the Mughal Viceroy of the Deccan, Shah Jahan's son Aurangzeb, moved against Bijapur and Golconda intending their annexation. The illness of Shah Jahan, however, turned Aurangzeb to the struggle for succession, giving them respite of some thirty years.

In the north-west, an attempt in 1647 to capture Badakshan and Balkh, the homeland of Babur, was unsuccessful and the Persians occupied Kandahar where several attempts were unsuccessfully made to dislodge them.

Aurangzeb moved northward in 1657 to assert his claims to the succession against his three brothers. Aurangzeb quickly defeated them and, imprisoning his father in the fort of Agra, had himself crowned Emperor in 1658. Shah Jahan died in captivity eight years later.

An Emperor's Day

The name 'Mughal' has always signified great splendour and luxury, and its use to describe the producers of expensive Hollywood epics (the 'movie moguls') is

only one example in our own times. But the Emperors who bore the reign-name were not, as might be supposed, idle voluptuaries wallowing in the pleasures of the harem. No Empire can be administered entirely from the bedroom and the dining-table. Shah Jahan, the builder of the Taj Mahal, the novelists' ideal of the 'Great Mogul'—

High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormuz and of Ind
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,

as Milton rather exotically put it—worked to a close and heavy routine of administrative duties. What this routine was, and what it entailed, can be discovered from contemporary Persian histories and, in particular, from information in the *Padshah-nama* of Abdul Hamid.

4 a.m. The Emperor rises two hours before sunrise and, after his toilet, says a prayer based upon the *Traditions* of Muhammad and with his face towards Mecca recites verses from the Koran. Just before sunrise he repairs to the palace mosque to make the first obligatory prayers of the day.

6.45 a.m. The Emperor appears at a window of the palace-fort—called the *jharakha-i-darshan* (the Sanskrit word *darshan* means the sight of something high or holy). The window is in the eastern wall of the Agra fort overlooking the river Jumna. Crowds of people assemble for the sight and are permitted direct access to the Emperor in order to make petitions or complaints. This period lasts about forty-five minutes. After the public appearance the place is cleared and elephant fights, a prerogative of the Emperor alone, take place. Shah Jahan was especially fond of this 'sport'.

7.40 a.m. The Emperor and his suite retire to the *Diwan-i-am* or 'Hall of Public Audience'. Originally, the place had been a piece of open ground shaded by canvas awnings, but in 1628 Shah Jahan built a gilded and decorated wooden pavilion. In 1638 this was replaced by the building that still stands today, constructed of red sandstone, open on three sides, with an alcove of white marble for the Emperor. Of the *darbar*, or 'audience', itself we have detailed accounts. At 7.40 a.m. the Emperor entered the hall through a door at the rear and took his seat on a cushion in the marble alcove. To his left and right were placed his sons, and in the hall itself, with their backs to the open sides, stood the courtiers, nobles, and officers of State. Those attendants who waited upon the Emperor's person stood to his right and left close to the alcove. The chief officers, in ranks according to their authority, faced the Emperor, and the royal standard-bearers holding their golden banners lined the wall at the Emperor's left hand. The hall, some two hundred feet long by sixty-seven feet wide, was now full, and lesser officials, soldiers, guards, etc. stood in an outside court-yard covered with canopies of velvet embroidered with gold.

When the Emperor had taken his seat, business began with the Paymaster-General presenting petitions from the military officers of the State and receiving the Emperor's

An Emperor's Day

171

instructions on promotions and changes. The holders of new appointments were then presented to the Emperor, by the heads of their departments, and were usually given a present of a robe of honour and a gift of a horse, weapons, or jewellery.

Then officials of the government made their reports and received instructions. The dispatches of provincial governors were read to the Emperor, and his instructions given. Another official, the chief *Sadr*, then brought forward suggestions for pensions and presents for needy scholars and poets, as well as for others who had call upon the imperial charity. After this, orders given on financial affairs were repeated to the Emperor a second time for his confirmation.

The main business being over, the officers of the imperial stables paraded the horses and elephants and showed their food. This peculiar practice had been started by the Emperor Akbar in order to prevent the stealing of money granted for the purchase of food for the animals.

According to the amount of business to be transacted, the *darbar* lasted about two hours. 9.40 a.m. After the grand *darbar* is over, the Emperor retires to the *Diwan-i-khas* or 'Hall of Private Audience'. There he writes with his own hand replies to the most important of his letters and gives verbal orders for replies to others. The drafts for these are submitted to the Emperor, revised and corrected by him, and sent to the harem for the affixing of the Great Seal, which is in the charge of the Empress. High revenue matters and the like are discussed here. The ordinary business over, the Emperor examines jewellery and other works of art and consults with architects on the design and placing of new buildings. The business in the *Diwan-i-khas* usually lasts about two hours.

11.40 a.m. The Emperor leaves for the *Shah Burj*, or 'Royal Tower', where secret affairs of State are discussed. Only the princes of the blood and the highest and most trusted officers are allowed in the tower.

12 midday. At this hour the Emperor retires to the harem, makes a prayer, eats, and sleeps for an hour. Afterwards, he hears petitions from widows and orphans, and other women which are submitted to the Empress who in turn reports on them to the Emperor.

4 p.m. Sometimes the Emperor returns to the Hall of Public Audience for other State business which ends with evening prayer in the Hall of Private Audience.

6.30 p.m. The *Diwan-i-khas* is lit with candles and the inner circle of the Emperor's officials meets and afterwards enjoys music and singing.

8 p.m. The Emperor again retires after prayer to the *Shah Burj* in order to discuss any further confidential business.

8.30 p.m. The Emperor retires to the harem and for an hour or so listens to songs sung by the women.

10 p.m. The Emperor retires to bed and listens to readings from books of travel or lives of the saints and histories of former kings.

At 10.30 he usually falls asleep.

This routine was varied on Wednesdays on which special courts of justice were assembled, and on Fridays, the Muslim sabbath, when no court was held.

The Collapse of the Mughal Power: Aurangzeb and the Marathas

THE REIGN OF AURANGZEB is the swan-song of Mughal rule. The tolerance and far-sighted *realpolitik* of Akbar, the establishment of what might almost be called a *national* monarchy, were abandoned in the interests of strict Muslim supremacy.

Aurangzeb was an able general, but from the beginning of his reign he was determined to impress an Islamic character upon the State. His first step was to reform the morals of the court and to force it to conform to his puritan asceticism. Music and poetry were no longer patronized. We have a contemporary view of this pious monarch.

‘The Emperor, a great worshipper of God by temperament, is noted for his rigid attachment to religion. In his great piety he passes whole nights in the palace mosque and keeps the company of devout men. In privacy he never sits on a throne. Before his accession he gave in alms part of his food and clothing and still devotes to alms the income of some villages near Delhi and of some salt tracts assigned to his privy purse. He keeps fast throughout Ramadan and reads the holy Koran in the assembly of religious men with whom he sits for six or even nine hours of the night. From his youth he abstained from forbidden food and practices, and from his great holiness does nothing that is not pure and lawful. Though at the beginning of his reign he used to hear the exquisite voices of ravishing singers and brilliant instrumental performances, and himself understands music well, yet now for several years past, in his great restraint and self-denial, he entirely abstains from this joyous entertainment. He never wears clothes prohibited by religion, nor uses vessels of silver and gold. No unseemly talk, no word of back-biting or falsehood, is permitted at his court. He appears twice or thrice daily in his audience chamber with a mild and pleasing countenance, to dispense justice to petitioners, who come in numbers without hindrance and obtain redress. If any one of them talks too much or acts improperly he is not displeased and never knits his brows. By hearing their words and watching their gestures he says that he acquires a habit of forbearance

The Collapse of the Mughal Power: Aurangzeb and the Marathas 173

and toleration. Under the dictates of anger and passion he never passes sentence of death.'

This cleaning-up of the court must have resulted in hardship for those nearest to, or dependent upon it, but Aurangzeb proceeded to attack Hinduism, and in 1669 he issued an order for the demolition of Hindu temples. A tax was imposed upon non-Muslims and an attempt was made to remove Hindu clerks from the civil service—though the resulting chaos led to the abandonment of this idea.

The political events of Aurangzeb's reign can be divided into two parts. Until 1681, the Emperor remained in the north while the south was incompetently administered by his generals. In the autumn of 1681, Aurangzeb moved south of the Narbada and took personal control. The first territorial expansions were made towards the north-east. In 1661, Mir Jumla (who had once been Prime Minister of Golconda, but was now the Governor of Bengal) set out to occupy Assam. Though initially successful, disease decimated the Mughal forces and Mir Jumla himself died on the way back to Dacca in 1663. The war continued for nearly twenty years but Assam was never occupied.

Farther south, Mir Jumla's successor, Shaista Khan—maternal uncle of Aurangzeb—attacked Portuguese pirates at Sandwip in the Bay of Bengal, and in 1666 captured Chittagong from the king of Arakan, who had supported the pirates as a powerful maritime ally against Mughal expansion.

In the north-west, communication with the strategic fortress of Kabul was menaced by rebellious Afghan tribes and in 1674 the Mughal forces suffered a major defeat. Aurangzeb took the field in person and, by an adroit mixture of force and diplomacy, destroyed the opposition by dividing the tribes. Though imperial prestige was restored and the frontier pacified, the troops which had to be withdrawn from the Deccan had left that area at the mercy of the Maratha leader, Sivaji.

After Afghanistan, Aurangzeb turned towards the Rajputana in order to continue his plans for the disruption of Hindu power. His intention was to divide Rajputana, with its tradition of Hindu chivalry and opposition, by annexing the Rathor State of Marwar. This he did in 1678 on the death of the ruler without leaving an heir. But on the birth of a posthumous son, war broke out and the Rathors were driven into the hills. Mewar was also occupied by Mughal troops and the towns and temples pillaged.

In 1681, Aurangzeb's son Akbar, who was out of favour because of his military inefficiency, rebelled, joined the Rajputs and proclaimed himself Emperor. Aurangzeb's position was extremely dangerous and if Akbar had moved decisively he might have defeated his father at Ajmer. Akbar,

however, was not of the right character and failed to move. Aurangzeb, by diplomacy, split the Rajputs from the Muslim troops who had joined Akbar and brought them over to his side. Akbar fled to the south and later to Persia, where he remained till his death in 1704.

Mewar concluded a treaty with Aurangzeb in June 1681, but the war in Marwar continued until the next reign and was finally settled in 1709.

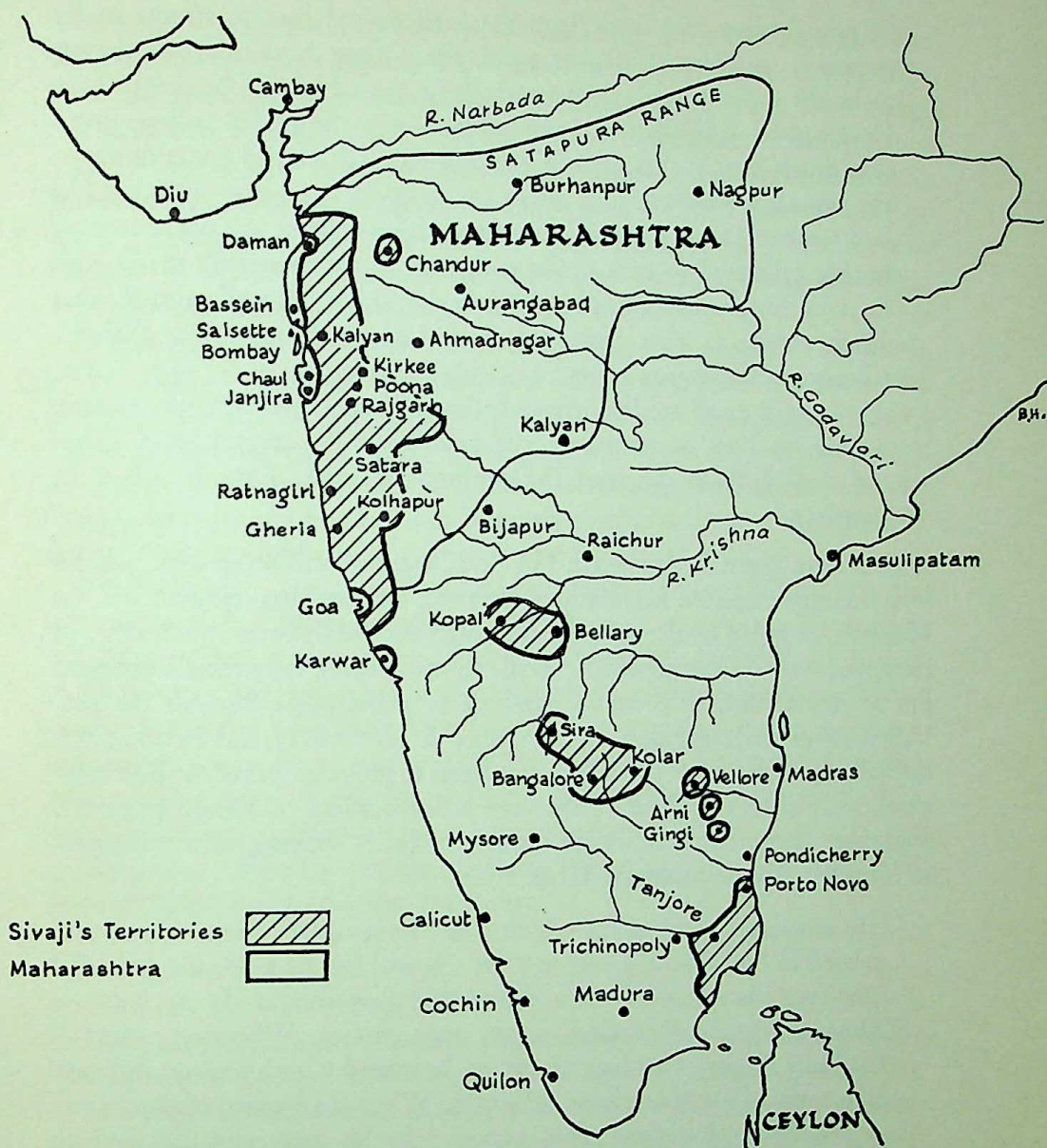
The Rajput wars were politically insane, for thousands of lives were needlessly lost for virtually no success, and the once loyal Rajput chiefs would no longer supply soldiers for the Mughal forces just at the time they were most needed in the Deccan, or on the still disturbed north-west frontier.

Aurangzeb, a few months after concluding the treaty with Mewar, crossed the Narbada and conquered the kingdom of Bijapur (in 1686) and occupied Golconda, by treachery, in the following year. He was now to encounter a new and more formidable enemy in the Marathas.

To the east and south-east of Bombay lies the territory of Maharashtra. The country is poor and the people tough and wiry—the ideal material for professional soldiers. As such, their services had been hired out by their leaders to anyone who cared to pay for them, and in the first half of the seventeenth century one of their chiefs, Shahji Bhonsle, had fought for Ahmadnagar, the Mughals, and Bijapur. In 1627 a son was born to him and named Sivaji, who was to become the founder of Maratha power.

Sivaji was brought up by his mother and, though apparently he could neither read nor write, he acquired great interest in the Indian epics and heroic tales. His personality is difficult to assess, as he has been the subject of the hagiolatry usually awarded to Indian heroes. Some historians have seen him as the instrument of a revival of Hindu power, others as merely a military opportunist. There is a vast literature of defence and objection and this is hardly the place to examine it. However, it is unquestionable that on the collapse of the Empire of Vijayanagar, in the middle of the century, Sivaji filled the position of the leader of Hindu political independence.

At the age of twenty, Sivaji commenced operations against a number of hill-forts, which brought him into conflict with Bijapur and the Mughals. In 1664, Aurangzeb sent one of his best generals against him and Sivaji submitted to becoming a tributary of the Empire. This situation, however, was not to last. Sivaji, arriving at Agra, was not received at court in the manner he had expected. Niccolao Manucci, a Venetian contemporary, has described Sivaji's reception in *Storia do Mogor*.



SOUTHERN INDIA AT THE DEATH OF SIVAJI 1680

'Upon Sivaji's arrival at Agra the king caused him to appear in his presence, and instead of giving him the promised position, which was to be the highest in his audience-hall, he caused him to be assigned the lowest place in the first circle of nobles within the golden railing. Sivaji was much hurt at this deed of Aurangzeb's, which did not conform to the promises received; and angry (so to speak) at being still alive, he said resolutely to Aurangzeb that the position allotted was not according to that promised to him under oath, nor to the agreement made with Raja Jai Singh. From this his first reception he could well surmise what would come to pass thereafter. Let Aurangzeb remember that the officers in His Majesty's presence, with the exception of Namdar Khan, who was a good soldier, were the rest of them so many old women, whom he had overcome in the field with the greatest ease. Thus not one of them deserved the position he held. Then in anger he came out.'

Orders were given for his arrest, but Sivaji escaped and on returning to his own country reopened negotiations. In 1670, fighting was resumed and the Mughals, crippled by the Afghan campaign and riddled with jealousies and intrigues, were unable to defeat Sivaji. In many cases, the generals preferred not to defeat him, in order to continue to make profit through the prolongation of the campaign. Sivaji extended his territory and in 1674 was formally crowned, after producing a pedigree to prove he was of the Kshatriya caste (only such could be legally crowned according to Hindu practice). Fighting continued until Sivaji's death in 1680. A striking tribute was paid to him by a hostile historian, Khafi Khan.

'He attacked the caravans which came from distant parts, and appropriated to himself the goods and the women. But he made it a rule, that wherever his followers went plundering they should do no harm to Mosques, the Book of God, or any one's women. Whenever a copy of the Holy Koran came into his hands, he treated it with respect, and gave it to some of his Mussulman followers. When the women of any Hindu or Muhammadan were taken prisoners by his men, and they had no friend to protect them, he watched over them till their relations came to buy them their liberty. . . . He laid down a rule, that whenever a place was plundered, the goods of the poor people, copper money, and vessels of brass and copper, should belong to the man who found them; but other articles, gold and silver, coined or uncoined, gems, valuable stuffs and jewels, were not to belong to the finder, but were to be given without the smallest deduction to the officers, and to be by them paid over to Sivaji's government.'

The Collapse of the Mughal Power: Aurangzeb and the Marathas 177

After the annexation of Bijapur and Golconda, Aurangzeb found himself faced to the west and south by an efficient and hostile power. The Marathas were aggressive, as their land was unable to support a large army, and raids were a necessary part of the structure of revenue-raising.

Aurangzeb was favoured by the character of Sivaji's son and successor, Sambhuji, an incompetent debauchee who was, however, not lacking in bravery. Intrigues divided the kingdom and many of the military commanders went over to the Mughals. In 1689, Sambhuji was captured, paraded through the Mughal camp, and then executed.

The Marathas, however, were not defeated and guerilla warfare continued. In the south-east, Sambhuji's brother Rajaram occupied the fortress of Jinji near Madras. In 1698, Jinji fell to the Mughals but Rajaram escaped. The resulting campaign against the Maratha forts which covered the country lasted from 1699 until 1705. The Mughal forces were demoralized and the treasury emptied. As one fort was captured after a long siege and the next one attacked, the Marathas would reoccupy the first.

At last, in 1705, Aurangzeb—now aged eighty-eight—gave up the hopeless task, retired to Ahmadnagar and died there.

While Aurangzeb was engaged for twenty-five years in fruitless campaigns in the Deccan, the power-house of Mughal rule in the north slowly fell to pieces. Mughal nobles, unfettered by the Emperor's presence, set about ensuring their own power and wealth. The Rajput chiefs were still in revolt, and in other parts of the Empire local rulers asserted themselves. The collapse of the central power was imminent. Another Akbar or an Aurangzeb might have saved the situation, but there was none and the disintegration of the Mughal Empire became inevitable.

An Englishman at the Court of Sivaji

The great antagonist of Aurangzeb, Sivaji, was the subject of many and hostile contemporary descriptions. The one given here by Henry Oxinden is plain, unbiased, and factual. Oxinden was sent by the President and Council of the East India Company's factory at Surat, to negotiate with Sivaji for the privileges of trade. The problem presented to the British was how to deal with Sivaji, who was actually in possession of the ports of the west coast, without antagonizing Aurangzeb. Oxinden was successful in his negotiations and a grant was made by Sivaji on 12 June 1674. This narrative is taken from an MS. diary in the India Office Library, London.

The 22nd: We received orders to ascend up the hill into the castle, the Raja having enordered us a house there; which we did. Leaving Pancharra about three of the clock

The European Infiltration

178

in the afternoon, we arrived at the top of that strong mountain about sunset, which is fortified more by nature than by art, being of very difficult access, with but one advance to it which is guarded by two narrow gates, and fortified with a strong high wall and bastions thereto. All the other part of the mountain is a direct precipice, so that it is impregnable except the treachery of some in it betrays it. On the mountain are many strong buildings, as the Raja's court and houses for other Ministers of State, to the number of about three hundred. It is in length about two and a half miles and breadth half a mile; but no pleasant trees nor any sort of grain grows thereon. Our house was about half a mile from the Raja's palace, into which we retired with no little content.

The 26th: The Raja, by the solicitation of Naranji Pandit, gave us audience, though busily employed with other great affairs, as his coronation, marriage, etc. I presented him and his son, Sambhuji Raja, with those particulars appointed for them by the President and Council, which they seemed to take very kindly, and the Raja assured us that we might now trade securely in his dominions without the least apprehension of evil from him, for that the peace was concluded. I replied that was our intent, and to that effect the President of the Council had sent me to his court to procure some Articles signed and privileges granted by him, which were the same we enjoyed in Hindustan, Persia, etc., where we traded. He answered it was well; and referring me to Moro Pandit, his *Peshwa* or 'Chancellor' to examine the Articles, and give him an account what they were, he and his son took their leaves, and retired into their private apartments, where they were busily employed with the *Banyans* in consultation and other ceremonies, and will hear of no manner of business until the coronation be over. We likewise departed to our house again, when I gave his Honour an account of my transactions hitherto.

May 28th: Went to Naranji Pandit, and took his advice concerning the presenting the rest of the Ministers of State, who told me that I might go in person to Moro Pandit, but to the rest I should send what was for them by Narayan Sinay, declaring likewise that if I would have our business speedily effected, and without impediment, it was necessary to present some officers with *pamerins* [lengths of fine cloth], etc., who were not mentioned in our list of presents, to which I assented, considering that the time of year was far spent, and that should we be forced to stay the whole rains at Rahiri, the Honourable Company's charge would be greater than the additional presents come to, and therefore desired to know who they were which we must oblige. He answered that two *pamerins* were not enough for Moro Pandit, that we must present him with four, and Dataji Pandit, *wakia-navis*, or 'public intelligencer', with a ring that is valued at 125 rupees; the *Dabir*, or Persian *escrivan*, with four *pamerins*; Samji Naiji, Keeper of the Seal, with four *pamerins*; and Abaji Pandit with four *pamerins*, and then I need not doubt of a speedy conclusion. Otherwise they would raise objections and scruples on purpose to impede our negotiations; for every officer in court expected something according to his degree and charge. So we took our *pamerins*, etc., for them, and went, accompanied by Naranji Pandit's son to Moro Pandit with his present, who received it very kindly, and promised he would press the Raja to confirm the Articles and dispeed us, as did all

the rest of the ministers unto whom, by Naranji Pandit's advice, I sent Narayan Sinay and a servant of my own.

The 29th: This day the Raja, according to Hindu custom, was weighed in gold, and poised about 16,000 *pagodas*, which money, together with one hundred thousand more, is to be distributed after the coronation unto the Brahmins who in great numbers are flocked hither from all the adjacent countries.

The 30th: This day I sent our linguist, Narayan Sinay, to Naranji Pandit to inquire what he had transacted in our business touching the signing of our Articles, etc., who returned answer that the Raja stopped his ears to all affairs whatever, and deferred them until his coronation was over, being busily employed with his Brahmins, to put things in a readiness against that day, it being now at hand, and therefore must have patience till then, declaring that the Raja had granted all our demands except those two Articles wherein it is expressed that our moneys shall go current in his dominions, and his in Bombay, and that he shall restore whatever wrecks may happen on his coast belonging to the English and the inhabitants of Bombay. The first he accounted unnecessary to be inserted in the Articles of peace, because he forbids not the passing of any manner of coin in his dominions, nor on the other side can he force his subjects to take those moneys whereby they shall be losers. But if our coin be of as fine an alloy and as weighty as the Mughal's and other Princes', he will not prohibit its passing current. To the other Article he says that it is against the laws of Konkan to restore any ships, vessels, or goods that are driven on shore by tempest or otherwise, and that should he grant us that privilege, the French, Dutch, and other Merchants in his country would demand and claim the same right with us, which he could not grant without breaking a custom that hath lasted for many ages. The rest of our desires he most willingly conceded, embracing with much satisfaction our friendship, and promising to himself and country much happiness by our settlement and trade. Naranji Pandit did likewise then inform me that he doubted not but to persuade the Raja to grant us our wrecks, because we enjoyed the same privileges in the Mughal and King of Deccan's country; but the former Articles concerning the money we must not expect it, and it was enough that the Raja would not prohibit its passing if made conformable in goodness and weight to other kings' coins, with which I might rest satisfied; and that as soon as possible after the Raja's coronation he would get the Articles signed and dispatch us; of all which I advised his Honour by the return of some coolies I sent to Bombay to ease our charges.

June 5th: Naranji Pandit sent me word that on the morrow about seven or eight in the morning the Raja Sivaji intended to ascend his throne, and he would take it kindly if I came to congratulate him therein, that it was necessary to present him with some small thing, it being not the custom of these eastern parts to appear before a prince empty-handed. I sent him answer that I would according to his advice wait on the Raja at the prescribed time.

The 6th: About seven or eight of the clock, went to court, and found the Raja seated in a magnificent throne, and all the nobles waiting on him in very rich attire, his son

The European Infiltration

Sambhuji Raja, Peshwa Moro Pandit, and a Brahmin of great eminence seated on an ascent under the throne, the rest, as well officers of the army as others, standing with great respect. I made my obeisance at a distance, and Narayan Sinay held up the diamond ring which was to be presented to him. He presently took notice of us, and enordered our coming nearer even to the foot of the throne, where, being vested, we were desired to retire, which we did, not so soon but that I took notice on each side of the throne there hung (according to the Moors' manner), on heads of gilded lances, many emblems of government and dominion, as on the right hand were two great fishes' heads of gold with very large teeth; on the left hand, several horses' tails, a pair of gold scales on a very rich lance head poised equally, an emblem of justice; and as we returned, at the palace gate there was standing two small elephants on each side, and two fair horses with gold bridles and rich furniture, which made us admire which way they brought them up the hill, the passage being so difficult and hazardous.

The 8th: The Raja was married to a fourth wife without any state or ceremony, and doth every day distribute his alms to the Brahmins.

The 9th and 10th: Every day solicited Naranji Pandit to get our Articles signed and dispatch us, the rains being set in violently. He returned answer that he would lose no opportunity, carrying them always about with him, but that the Raja was totally taken up in the distribution of his alms to the Brahmins.

The 11th: Naranji Pandit sent word that the Raja had granted all the demands and Articles excepting our money passing current in his country, which he accounted needless, and had signed them; that tomorrow the rest of the Ministers of State would sign them, and that we might depart as soon as we pleased.

The 12th: This day the rest of the Ministers of State signed the Articles, and I went to receive them at the Pandit's house, when they were delivered me by him, who expressed much kindness for our nation, and promised on all occasions to negotiate our business at court with the Raja, for which having rendered him thanks, and given a cousin of his a *pamerin* for his pains in translating the Articles and other services, I took my leave of him.

13th: Departed Rahiri castle, and the 16th arrived at Bombay and delivered his Honour the Articles of peace signed and ratified by Sivaji and his Ministers of State.

The Break-up of the Mughal Empire

THE CUSTOMARY STRUGGLE for power followed the death of Aurangzeb, but it was a struggle between the second-rate and the worse, for out of it was to emerge a series of weak rulers who permitted the Empire to fall apart at the seams.

Prince Muazzam finally defeated the other contenders for the throne, and assumed the reign-title of Bahadur Shah. Unfortunately, though 'pious and amiable', he was incapable of decisive rule, though he did preserve an uneasy peace—by treaty with the Rajputs, and by sending back to the Marathas Sambhuji's son, Shahu, who had been held in captivity since the murder of his father. An insurrection by the Sikhs was also suppressed. Bahadur was succeeded in 1712, after yet another war of succession, by his son Jahandar, who was deposed and strangled by Farrukhsiyar. Jahandar's short reign was full of violence though, as the Muslim historian Khafi Khan has recorded, 'it was a fine time for minstrels and singers and all the tribes of dancers and actors'.

Farrukhsiyar owed his throne to two brothers, Husain Ali and Abdullah, but turned against them. They deposed, blinded and finally murdered him in 1719. The 'king-makers' now placed various puppets on the throne, the last of whom, Muhammad Shah, refused to conform to their pulls on the strings. In attempting to dispose of him they were themselves captured and killed.

Muhammad Shah, however, was to encounter something more deadly than factions at court. In 1739, Nadir Shah, who had made himself king of Persia in 1736, marched from Kandahar, captured Kabul and Lahore, and defeated the Mughal forces near Panipat. Muhammad Shah came to terms with the invader and the two kings entered Delhi side by side in peace. Unfortunately, the murder of some Persian soldiers in the alleys of the city aroused the Persians to reprisals. The city was looted and the inhabitants massacred until 'the streets were strewn with corpses like a garden with dead leaves. The city was reduced to ashes and looked like a burnt plain.' Nadir Shah, laden with loot the Punjab, Sind, and Kabul ceded to him, returned to Persia.

The sack of Delhi was the death-blow of the Mughal Empire. Its emperors were now shadows, pawns in the hands of adventurers. Sometimes

the Marathas were called in, then, becoming too powerful, were defeated by an alliance of Afghans and Mughals, until the Emperor Shah Alam (1759-1806) put himself for a time under the protection of the British. How this was possible must be left to another chapter.

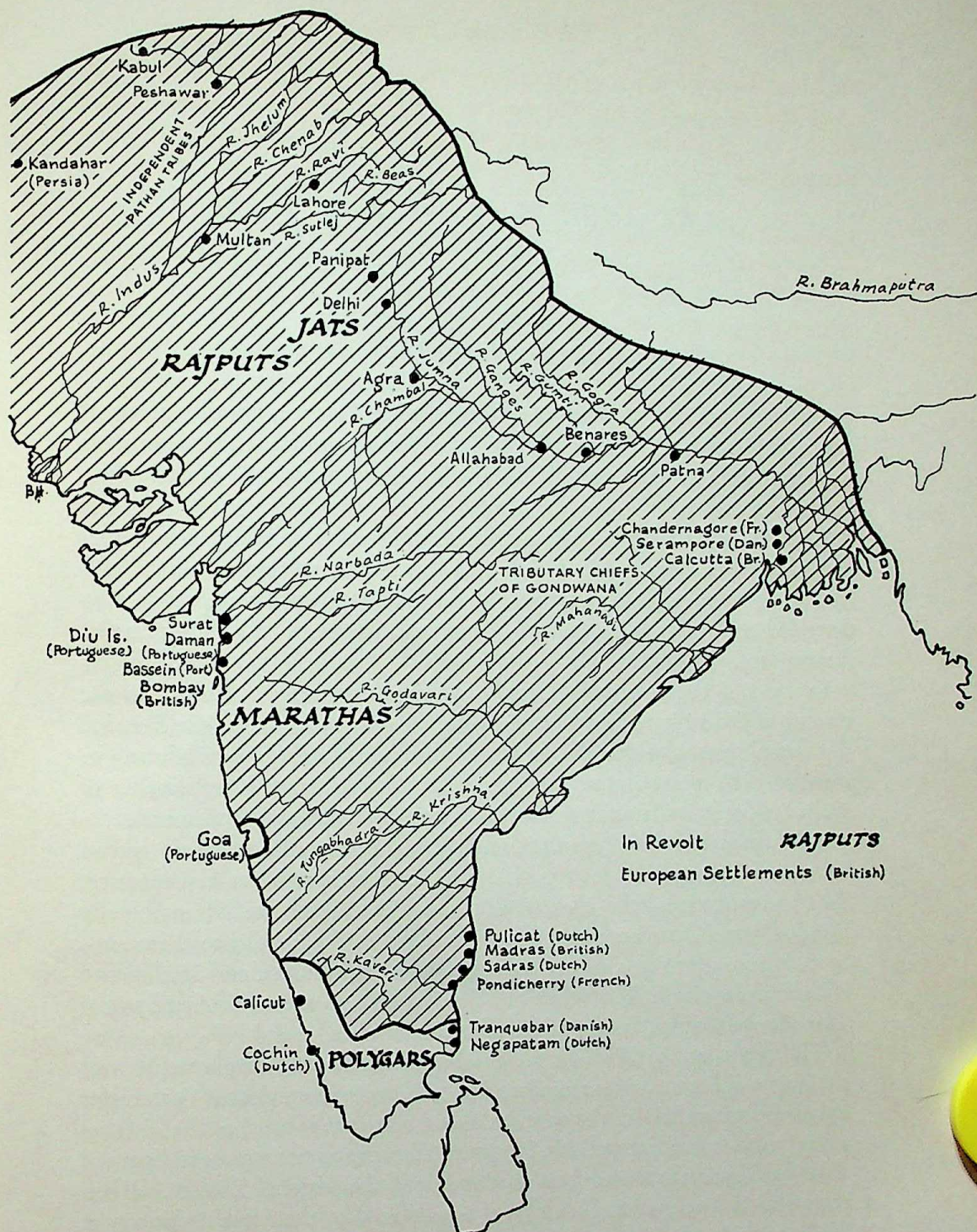
Territorial changes and the growth of new centres of power during this period are important, not only in relation to the disintegration of the Mughal Empire but to the infiltration of the European, and some detail is necessary to an understanding of events.

To the south, the principal Muslim ruler was the Nizam of Hyderabad. Under Aurangzeb, the Nizam had been *subadar* of the province known as the Deccan formed from the former territories of Golconda. The Nawab of Arcot ruled an area known as the Carnatic, to the south-east, and was nominally subordinate to the Nizam. To the west, Mysore was ruled by a Hindu dynasty, but later was occupied by Haidar Ali of whom more will be heard over his conflict with the British.

Bengal and Bihar, in the north, were to all intents and purposes independent under a Nawab, as was also the territory of Oudh to the west. At Rohilkhand, north of the Ganges, and Farrukhabad, between the Ganges and the Jumna, Muslim military adventurers had set themselves up as rulers. West of these lay what remained of the kingdom of Delhi. Though these Muslim rulers had thrown off direct rule, they still looked to the Emperor as a source of prestige. The Nawab of Oudh was also Prime Minister of the Empire, and all the rulers, adventurers or not, looked to Delhi for the regularization of their rule.

Rajputana, under its chiefs, was to a large extent dominated by the Marathas. Since the death of Sivaji, important changes had taken place in the leadership of the Marathas. Sivaji had ruled through a Council with authority divided between the military leaders and the civil administrators, who were usually Brahmins. By 1720, however, the Brahmin prime ministers, known as *peshwas*, had become hereditary leaders with the king merely a figure-head. The original territory of Sivaji was ruled by the Peshwa from its capital at Poona. The remainder of Maratha territory was ruled by the military leaders who had acquired it by conquest, acknowledging the supremacy of the Peshwa. The Marathas were now a confederacy rather than a single State.

Significant events were also taking place during this period on the Coromandel coast where, as we shall see, both the French and English had established themselves. But it is in 1756 and in Bengal that a new period in Indian history is to have its beginnings.



INDIA AT THE DEATH OF AURANGZÉB 1707

The Nature of Mughal Rule

I

THE BEGINNINGS OF POLITICAL EMPIRE

THE GREAT ACHIEVEMENT of the early Mughals was not the success of their conquests but the form of their rule. Theirs was the first invasion that was more than an alien occupation, the first conquest to come to terms with the Indian scene.

The first act which shows a political rather than religious concept of dominion was Humayun's treaty with the Hindu ruler of Kalinjar and the latter's appointment as a noble of the Empire, but it was Akbar who extended the policy of integrating Hindu chiefs into the administration of the country.

In 1562 Akbar married a Rajput princess, ensuring as he did so the interest of the most powerful single force in northern India, in the Empire. The employment of Hindus in the highest offices of State continued to increase, even to appointment of one (Man Singh) to the Governorship of Kabul, a position of immense strategic power in an entirely Muslim area.

The removal of the pilgrim tax and the poll tax on Hindus again spread a sense of identity with the régime and a direct interest in its maintenance. The lower levels of the civil service had always been staffed mainly by Hindus, but Akbar opened the highest offices in the Empire to them and, by doing so, supplied a controlled outlet for the ambitions and intelligence of the Hindu chiefs. The prizes of office were by no means restricted to the sons of royal houses, but to talent of whatever rank.

The exceptions to Akbar's policy of conciliation and employment were the Ranas of Mewar, who remained in active opposition. Akbar's principles led to the tranquillity of the country, above all to the identity of the Mughal power with Indian interest. No longer an alien conqueror but an indigenous State—this was the broad base that sustained the Mughal Empire. When the political intelligence of Akbar was displaced by the religious bigotry of his successors, the Hindu rulers and the masses alienated from the régime by discrimination, persecution, and taxation, then the Empire slowly began to collapse.

II

THE ADMINISTRATION

It must never be forgotten that the Mughal Empire was a military State and every officer a member of the army. The supreme authority was the Emperor, as commander-in-chief and the source of justice and legislation. Though the highest offices were as a matter of policy open to Hindus the majority of officials were 'foreigners'. The efficiency of the public service was seriously impaired during the uninterested 'rule' of Jahangir, and the lack of a strong hand permitted the growth of corruption and personal ambition.

There were no hereditary nobles, but only ranks carrying various rights and rewards. The Mongol system of grading by the command of so many horse, a Commander of Five Thousand and downwards, was made a convention and the title did not necessarily indicate the actual number of men the holder was bound to maintain. For a short period, officers were paid a salary, but later it became common to assign a *jagir* (land), the revenue from which was to be their reward. No absolute title was given to land so assigned, and exploitation for the highest return in the shortest time was the obvious result.

Under the Emperor were various departments of government, under officers of State. The names given to these offices are exotic and confusing, as in later times similar names were used to identify different functions. Here English departmental equivalents are used for the sake of clarity.

The main departments of State were (i) the Imperial Household; (ii) the Exchequer; (iii) Military Pay and Accounts; (iv) the Judiciary; (v) Religious Endowments and Charities, and (vi) the Censorship of Public Morals. Akbar later separated the general administration from the revenue system.

The Empire was divided into provinces under a Viceroy who was responsible to the Emperor for all administration except the revenue. In the provinces were other officers concerned with police and internal security. The larger cities also had a Governor who combined both executive and judiciary functions.

The judiciary was not independent. Judges sat at the principal centres but the Emperor was the fountain of justice. Islamic law was their main concern, and in civil and criminal matters they shared authority with the executive officers.

The revenue system consisted of two parts—that reserved to the central authority, land-revenue, customs, mint, inheritance, and poll-taxes, and that reserved to the provincial authority, consisting of minor duties and taxes

which were spent without the instructions of the revenue authority at the centre.

The assessment of revenue in an agricultural economy is fraught with imponderables—to fix a tax, field by field, season by season, is impossible, the work required would outweigh the yield. For a time, Akbar used a system instituted by Sher Shah, of individual assessment of the peasants. However, this system failed to work and a new one was evolved which, though just, was extremely heavy. The demand of the State was fixed at one-third of the produce, either in cash or kind, the money-equivalent varying according to the crop. The peasant therefore knew his liability before he planned his sowing. At harvest, the revenue-officials calculated the tax and collected it.

The system worked well, but was shaken by a series of unprecedentedly high harvests which created a glut and made much produce unsaleable, and on one occasion large sums of revenue had to be written off. The advantage of the system was that no tax was payable if a crop failed.

At the same time, agricultural development was encouraged, more valuable crops planted and new areas brought under cultivation. The effect of this is obscure, but agrarian revolt—which would have been an index of agricultural depression or oppression—was practically unknown.

The system of revenue assessment was discarded under Akbar's successors, though when is not clear. The new system was the iniquitous one of assessing a village by a lump sum, and holding the headman responsible for its payment to the treasury.

Most of Akbar's administrative methods remained under his successors. Jahangir's indifference to the personal rule of Nur Jahan began to undermine the bureaucracy. But the death-blow was to come from Aurangzeb who was a great soldier but no diplomat or administrator. The Muslim historian Khafi Khan wrote an epitaph not only suitable for the Emperor, but for the Mughal Empire as well.

'Of all the sovereigns of the House of Timur—nay of all the sovereigns of Delhi—no one, since Sikandar Lodi, has ever been apparently so distinguished for devotion, austerity, and justice. In courage, long-suffering, and sound judgment, he was unrivalled. But from reverence of the injunction of the Law he did not make use of punishment, and without punishment the administration of a country cannot be maintained. Dissensions had arisen among his nobles through rivalry. So every plan and project that he formed came to little good and every enterprise which he undertook was long in execution and failed of its object.'

Life Under the Mughals

I

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

MUGHAL SOCIETY REMAINED a feudal organization with the Emperor at its summit. The nobles lived in excessive luxury in fine buildings, and were much given to wine and women. A middle class of merchants and traders, thrifty and rich, separated the rulers from the common peasantry who often lived in great poverty.

Most of our information on social conditions is from European sources, as the Muslim historians were not particularly concerned with recording the unspectacular lives of the masses.

Francisco Pelsaert, head of the Dutch factory at Agra, has left an account of a poor man's house.

'Their houses are built of mud with thatched roofs. Furniture there is little or none except some earthenware pots to hold water and for cooking and two beds, one for the man, the other for his wife; their bed cloths are scanty, merely a sheet or perhaps two, serving as under- and over-sheet. This is sufficient in the hot weather, but the bitter cold nights are miserable indeed, and they try to keep warm over little cow-dung fires.'

In western India people wore better clothes and coloured turbans, but according to Ralph Fitch, in northern India 'the people go all naked save a little cloth bound about their middle. In winter the men wear quilted gowns of cotton and quilted caps with a slit to look out at and so tied down beneath their ears.'

Suttee and child marriage were common, and Akbar attempted to regulate such marriages but was not successful. Huge dowries were a common place and led to wide indebtedness. The Marathas, however, did not encourage such luxuries and their marriage regulations were extremely liberal, certain elements even permitting the remarriage of widows.

The eighteenth century, with its unease and insecurity, led to a serious decline in social morals but, strangely enough, did not see the cessation of Hindu-Muslim *rapprochement*; Emperors still patronized Hindu festivals.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

We have very little information on the condition of trade and agriculture in the periods before the reign of Akbar, but for his there is extensive material from such works as the *Ain-i-Akbari* and from contemporary Europeans.

The cities were places of prosperity but the situation in the countryside was somewhat different. The agricultural peasant still remained within the social structure of caste, but the introduction of landlords led to considerable oppression. As has been mentioned in the last chapter, land-tenures were given on a temporary basis to the officers of State, in place of a fixed salary from the treasury, and the interest of the holder of the *jagir* was in getting as much return as possible from the land while he still had the good fortune to possess it. On top of this was the frequent outbreak of famine. The sensible tax system of Akbar, which demanded no tax when there were no crops, was abandoned by his successors, and the State gave no substantial remission nor did it engage in famine relief on any organized scale. Terrible famines produced the most appalling results, cannibalism and mass suicides were commonplace. A Dutch merchant, Van Twist, has left a description of the famine in Gujarat in 1630.

'As the famine increased, men abandoned towns and villages and wandered helplessly. It was easy to recognize their condition: eyes sunk deep in the head, lips pale and covered with slime, the skin hard, with the bones showing through, the belly nothing but a pouch hanging down empty, knuckles and knee-caps showing prominently. One would cry and howl for hunger, while another lay stretched on the ground dying in misery; wherever you went, you saw nothing but corpses.'

India in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been described by a modern Indian economic historian as the 'industrial workshop of the world', an apt phrase, for the economic and financial organization of crafts was far advanced in comparison with Europe, and techniques of production already contained the specialization of tasks—artisans working in groups on particular stages of manufacture.

The demands of foreign merchants helped to develop the organization of production. The Mughals encouraged the establishment of *karkhanas* or 'factories' under the control of a Superintendent of Arts and Crafts. Bernier, the French traveller, went round one of these factories in Delhi.

'Large halls are seen in many places, called *karkhanas* or "workshops" for the artisans. In one hall embroiderers are busily employed, superintended by a master. In another you see goldsmiths, in a third painters, in a fourth varnishers in lacquer-work, in a fifth joiners, turners, tailors, shoemakers, in a sixth manufacturers of silk, brocade, and those fine muslins of which are made turbans, girdles with golden flowers, and [the fine] drawers worn by females . . . beautifully embroidered with needle-work. The artisans repair every morning to their respective workshops, where they remain employed the whole day; and in the evening return to their homes.'

To encourage trade, monopolies were given by the government for a fixed period and assisted with loans from the State treasury.

The main exports in the seventeenth century were calico, muslin, and yarn, raw cotton, raw silk, rice, sugar, indigo, pepper, and spices, as well as luxury goods, gold and silver ware, jewellery and leather. But the basis of the export trade was hand-loom products, which were sold in vast quantity over the whole of South Asia and as far as Japan, as well as the Near East, Central Asia, and the east coast of Africa.

Towards the end of Aurangzeb's reign, however, the inefficiency of the administration and the breakdown of security led to serious crises in production and trade. During the disintegration of the Mughal Empire, the invasion of Nadir Shah, court revolutions, looting and banditry, as well as the abuse of trade privileges by Europeans led to the collapse of Indian industry. By 1765, Bengal could be described by a Select Committee of the East India Company as a

'presidency divided, headstrong and licentious, a government without nerves, a treasury without money, and service without subordination, discipline, or public spirit . . . amidst a general stagnation of useful industry and of licensed commerce, individuals were accumulating immense riches, which they had ravished from the insulted prince and helpless people, who groaned under the united pressure of discontent, poverty, and oppression.'

III

ART AND CULTURE

Architecture under the Mughals had extensive influence. Babur brought in architects from Constantinople, Akbar had a passion for building and erected a whole new city, Fathpur Sikri. Jahangir did not indulge in much

The European Infiltration

building but Shah Jahan will never be forgotten as long as the Taj Mahal remains. He also began to build a new capital at Delhi, to be called Shah-jahanabad. The palace is of such beauty that the Emperor had engraved on the cornices of the *Diwan-i-khas*, or 'Hall of Private Audience', the famous couplet:

'Agar firdaus bar ruyi zamin ast,
Hamin ast, hamin ast, hamin ast!'

'If on earth be an Eden of bliss,
It is this, it is this, it is this!'

The Mughals were great lovers of the garden, with fountains, cascades, and pools which so often form a background to the paintings of the period. Painting did not receive much attention under the early Muslims in India, because of its association with idolatry, but Babur brought Persian examples of book-illustration. Akbar encouraged artists and once said, 'It seems to me that a painter has peculiar means of recognizing God.'

Painting under the Mughals was usually for book-illustration and miniatures. An aristocratic art, it was both realist and romantic, and though it did take features from Rajput art, its sources were in Persia and Central Asia.

Literature under the Mughals was predominantly Persian. Babur and Jahangir wrote their own memoirs. The greatest historian of the period was undoubtedly Abul Fazl, the author of the *Akbarnama* or 'Life of Akbar', from which a great deal of our knowledge of the Emperor and his times is derived. Sanskrit works, such as the *Bhagavad Gita* were translated into Persian.

Away from the court and its influences, the growth of vernacular literature continued. The most outstanding example is the *Ramayana* of Tulsi Das, a Brahmin born near Delhi in 1532 who wrote, not in Sanskrit, but in the language of ordinary people. In it, he tells the old story of Rama, no longer a dead hero but a living saviour. There were many others who were 'like so many glow-worms giving their light here and there' who enriched Hindi with their poetry.

IV

RELIGION: THE RISE OF THE SIKHS

The attempt at a Muslim-Hindu synthesis made by Kabir and others has already been mentioned, but a brief look at one of Kabir's disciples is

necessary as the movement he founded had considerable impact on the history of India.

Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, was born in 1469 and his mission was to unite Hindu and Muslim. Nanak was content to be a teacher, and it was left to Arjun (1563-1606), the fifth Guru, to organize the Sikh community and to establish the *Adi Granth*, the holy scripture of the Sikhs. His activities came to the notice of the Mughals and he was tortured and killed. A passage in his writings shows how in less than a hundred years after the death of Nanak, the Sikhs had evolved a new religion.

'I do not keep the Hindu fast, nor the Muslim Ramadan.
I serve Him alone who is my refuge.
I serve the one Master, who is also Allah.
I have broken with the Hindu and the Muslim,
I will not worship with the Hindu, nor like the Muslim go to Mecca.
I shall serve Him and no other.
I will not pray to idols nor say the Muslim prayer.
I shall put my heart at the feet of the one Supreme Being,
For we are neither Hindus nor Mussulmans.'

On his death, the Sikhs became more and more a military community. In 1675, the ninth Guru, Tegh Bahadur, was summoned to Delhi by Aurangzeb and ordered to become a Muslim. According to legend, he refused but offered to perform a miracle by which the headsman's sword would fail to cut off his head. He wrote some words on a paper and tied this around his neck. When he was decapitated, the paper was found to read: 'I gave my head, but not my faith.'

Under the tenth Guru, Gobind Singh (1666-1708), the Sikhs became the powerful military group that was later to develop into the Sikh State and to play an important part in the history of the nineteenth century.

The Thrones of Aurangzeb

The following description of the court of Aurangzeb is taken from *Six Voyages en Perse et Aux Indes* by Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, published in 1676. The translation is by William Crooke. Tavernier's father was a geographer and engraver and inspired his son with a desire to visit foreign countries. Tavernier became a merchant, a dealer in precious stones, and between the years 1638 and 1688 visited India six times.

The Emperor's palace is a good half a league in circuit. The walls are of fine cut stone, with battlements, and at every tenth battlement there is a tower. The fosses are full of

The European Infiltration

192

water and are lined with cut stones. The principal gate has nothing magnificent about it, nor has the first court, where the nobles are permitted to enter on their elephants.

Leading from this court there is a long and wide passage which has on both sides handsome porticoes, under which there are many small chambers where some of the horse-guards lodge. These porticoes are elevated about two feet from the ground, and the horses, which are fastened to rings outside, take their feed on the edge. In certain places there are large doors which lead to different apartments, as to that of the women, and to the Judges' court. In the middle of this passage there is a channel full of water, which leaves a good roadway on either side, and forms little basins at equal distances. This long passage leads to a large court where the Omrahs, i.e. the great nobles of the kingdom, who resemble the Bachas [Pashas] in Turkey, and the Khans in Persia, constitute the bodyguard. There are low chambers around this court for their use, and their horses are tethered outside their doors.

From this second court a third is entered by a large gate, by the side of which there is as it were, a small room raised two or three feet from the ground. It is where the royal wardrobe is kept, and from whence the *khilat* garb of honour is obtained whenever the Emperor wishes to honour a stranger or one of his subjects. A little farther on, over the same gate, is the place where the drums, trumpets, and hautboys are kept, which are heard some moments before the Emperor ascends his throne of justice, to give notice to the Omrahs, and again when the Emperor is about to rise. When entering this third court you face the *diwan* where the Emperor gives audience. It is a grand hall elevated some four feet above the ground floor, and open on three sides. Thirty-two marble columns sustain as many arches, and these columns are about four feet square with their pedestals and some mouldings. When Shah Jahan commenced the building of this hall he intended that it should be enriched throughout with wonderful works in mosaic, like those in the chapel of the Grand Duke in Italy; but having made a trial upon two or three pillars to the height of two or three feet, he considered that it would be impossible to find enough stones for so considerable a design, and that moreover it would cost an enormous sum of money; this compelled him to stop the work, and content himself with a representation of different flowers.

In the middle of this hall, and near the side overlooking the court, as in a theatre, they place the throne, when the Emperor comes to give audience and to render justice. . . . In the court below the throne there is a space twenty feet square surrounded by balustrades, which on some occasions are covered with plates of silver, and at others with plates of gold. At the four corners of this space the four Secretaries of State are seated, who both in civil as well as criminal matters fulfil the roles of advocates. Several nobles place themselves around the balustrade, and here also is placed the music which is heard while the Emperor is in *diwan*. This music is sweet and pleasant, and makes so little noise that it does not disturb those present from the serious occupations on which they are engaged. When the Emperor is seated on his throne, some great noble stands by him, most frequently his own children. Between eleven o'clock and noon the Nawab, who is the

The Thrones of Aurangzeb

193

first Minister of State, like the Grand Vizier in Turkey, comes to make a report of whatever has passed in the chamber where he presides, which is at the entry of the first court, and when he has finished speaking the Emperor rises.

It should be stated that the Great Mughal has seven magnificent thrones, one wholly covered with diamonds, the others with rubies, emeralds, or pearls.

The principal throne, which is placed in the hall of the first court, resembles in form and size our camp-beds; that is to say it is about six feet long and four wide. Upon the four feet, which are very massive, and from twenty to twenty-five inches high, are fixed the four bars which support the base of the throne, and upon these bars are ranged twelve columns, which sustain the canopy on three sides, that which faces the court being open. Both the feet and the bars, which are more than eighteen inches long, are covered with gold inlaid and enriched with numerous diamonds, rubies, and emeralds. In the middle of each bar there is a large balass ruby, cut *en cabochon*, with four emeralds round it, forming a square cross. Next in succession, from one side to the other along the length of the bars there are similar crosses, arranged so that in one the ruby is in the middle of four emeralds, and in another the emerald is in the middle and four balass rubies surround it. The emeralds are table cut, and the intervals between the rubies and the emeralds are covered with diamonds, the largest of which do not exceed ten to twelve carats in weight, all showy stones, but very flat. There are also in some parts pearls set in gold, and upon one of the longer sides of the throne there are four steps to ascend it. Of the three cushions or pillows which are upon the throne, that which is placed behind the Emperor's back is large and round like one of our bolsters, and the two others placed at his sides are flat. Moreover, a sword, a mace, a round shield, a bow, and a quiver with arrows, are suspended from his throne, and all these weapons, as also the cushions and steps, both of this throne and the other six, are covered over with stones which match those with which each of the thrones respectively is enriched. . . .

The underside of the canopy is covered with diamonds and pearls, with a fringe of pearls all round, and above the canopy, which is a quadrangular-shaped dome, there is a peacock with elevated tail made of blue sapphires and other coloured stones, the body of gold inlaid with precious stones, having a large ruby in front of the breast, from whence hangs a pear-shaped pearl of fifty carats or thereabouts, and of a somewhat yellow water. On both sides of the peacock there is a large bouquet of the same height as the bird, and consisting of many kinds of flowers made of gold inlaid with precious stones. On the side of the throne opposite the court there is a jewel consisting of a diamond from eighty to ninety carats weight, with rubies and emeralds round it, and when the Emperor is seated he has this jewel in full view. But in my opinion the most costly point about this magnificent throne is that the twelve columns supporting the canopy are surrounded with beautiful rows of pearls, which are round and of fine water, and weigh from six to ten carats each. At four feet distance from the throne two umbrellas are fixed, on either side, the sticks of which for seven or eight feet in height are covered with diamonds, rubies,

The European Infiltration

and pearls. These umbrellas are of red velvet, and are embroidered and fringed all round with pearls.

This is what I have been able to observe regarding this famous throne, commenced by Tamerlane and completed by Shah Jahan.

Behind this grand and magnificent throne a smaller one stands which has the form of a bathing-tub. It is of oval shape, about seven feet in length and five in breadth, and the outside is covered with diamonds and pearls, but it has no canopy.

The other five thrones are arranged in a superb hall in another court, and are covered with diamonds without any coloured stones. I shall not give a minute description of them for fear of wearying the reader, not forgetting that one may become disgusted with the most beautiful things when they are too often before the eyes. These five thrones are disposed in such a manner that they form a cross, four making a square, the fifth being in the middle, but somewhat nearer to the two which are placed farthest away from the people.

The Quest for Eastern Trade

WE HAVE SEEN in Chapter I of this part, how the decline of the Portuguese power and the war in Holland had turned the Dutch towards the Eastern Seas. At the same time, the expansion of British sea-power in the reign of Elizabeth had brought with it the means of finding new markets for English manufactures. The English had already begun to taste the riches of Asia. Drake, circumnavigating the world, had reached the Spice Islands, and his capture of a Portuguese trader had given him proofs of the wealth of the Indies. Also, in the Levant, the Turkey Company had received trading rights, and Newbery, Fitch, and Leedes had reached the India of Akbar. Fitch, the only one to return to England, was present in 1599 when eighty members of the City of London met to form the East India Company.

There was no thought of dominion in the minds of these hard-headed men, only trade in spices, silks, gems, camphor, and indigo—the luxuries of the rich. The first voyage fitted out was not for India at all, but for Sumatra, as were the next eight voyages between 1601 and 1618.

In 1608, the Company's agents in Bantam and the Moluccas pointed out that the broadcloth the English wished to export was unfit for tropical climes, rotted in the warehouses and became unsaleable. They suggested a trading-post in India to buy the calicoes which were demanded by local traders. Jahangir gave permission for the establishment of such a post at Surat, the chief port of western India, but the Portuguese were still powerful enough to prevent the English from proceeding until 1612.

The Company had originally excluded the appointment of 'gentlemen', fearing that minds unused to the ways of trade might indulge in extravagances unsuited to honest merchants, and had even passed a resolution that they 'should be allowed to sort their business with men of their own quality'. But in their relations with the Mughals, traders were at a disadvantage, and in 1615 Sir Thomas Roe was sent as the ambassador of James I and of the Company; though he did not succeed in producing treaties in the Western manner, he was a 'Joseph in the court of the Pharaoh, for whose sake all his nation seemed to fare the better' despite the fact that the Company kept him short of money.

Though nominally England and Holland were allies in Europe, in the

The European Infiltration

East the Dutch swept the English from the Spice Islands. The English turned against the Portuguese in an attempt to make an entry into the Persian Gulf and, in alliance with the Shah of Persia, the English took the island of Ormuz which bars the entrance to the Gulf. The exercise was not looked upon with favour by the Company's factors in India.

'Indeed (to speak truth) that enterprise was not well entertained on our parts, except upon more certain grounds and better conditions to have enjoyed the command thereof, and not to dispossess Christianity (although our enemies) to place in faithless Moors, which cannot but be much displeasing to Almighty God.'

By 1623, the Dutch had soundly defeated the English (1618-20) and in that year ten Englishmen were executed by them at Amboyna for an alleged conspiracy to assassinate the Governor. These events finally convinced the Company that its future lay in India.

For the next ten years the Dutch fought the Portuguese, ejecting them from the East Indies, Malacca, and Ceylon. On the mainland, Shah Jahan attacked the Portuguese settlement at Hugli in Bengal, where some four thousand prisoners refusing to embrace Islam were put to death.

In November 1633, the East India Company, whose affairs had for ten years suffered from timid administration, sent William Methwold, who made a truce with the Portuguese. All, however, was not well in the Empire of Shah Jahan, who did not approve of the possibility of an Anglo-Portuguese *rapprochement*. The Company's agents were murdered and their caravans looted. Back in England, the struggle between Charles I and his Parliament was ripening and the king was unfriendly to the Company and its City backers. The result was that two English privateers began to attack Indian and Portuguese ships carrying passes issued by the Company. Because of this, Methwold was imprisoned for some weeks by the Governor of Surat.

The Company already had an establishment on the Coromandel coast at Masulipatam, the principal port of Golconda. Under pressure from the Dutch, they established another factory at Armagaon, but finally returned to Masulipatam and extracted a *firman* from the Sultan permitting them to trade freely at ports in Golconda for the payment of duties. This arrangement did not, however, prevent squeezing by local officials, and in 1639 Madras was leased from the local ruler, and a fortified establishment built in 1641.

Factories (the name given to trading-posts) were established in Bengal and Orissa to deal with the hand-loom products of the area. Trading spread to China in what might be called partnership with the Portuguese, so that in 1660 Samuel Pepys could record 'did send for a cup of tee (a China drink) of which I never had drank before'.

By 1647, the Company operated twenty-three Indian establishments, but affairs in England, the Civil War between king and Parliament, brought the Company sequestrations by the king and, later, indifference from Cromwell. For a while, the abandonment of Eastern trade was considered. The Dutch once again turned against the English with success; French pirates were active. The fortunes of the Company were at their lowest ebb.

The restoration of Charles II brought better times, and his marriage in 1662 to Catherine of Braganza brought the island of Bombay. The English were now entering a new phase and in it can be found the origins of the British Empire in India. It is a period of Indian history little known or written about.

With anarchy and unrest in the Mughal Empire, and the rising power of the Marathas who had attacked Surat in 1664 and 1670, it became obvious to the Company's agents in India that the flag followed trade and that it was necessary to defend them both.

In 1668, Charles II, as always in need of money, transferred Bombay to the Company in return for a substantial loan. The new President (as the chief merchant was called) at Surat, Gerald Aungier, in 1669 advised the Company to move his headquarters to Bombay after it had been fortified.

In 1674 (as described on pp. 177-80), Henry Oxinden was present at the coronation of Sivaji and concluded a peace treaty with him 'which if punctually observed will be of no small benefit to the Honourable Company's officers, both on this Island Bombay and their factories which may be settled in Sivaji Raja's Dominions'. Sivaji realized that British naval expertise might well be a valuable ally in his wars against the Mughals, particularly as a Mughal fleet, sheltered near Bombay during the monsoon, occupied its time in raiding the Maratha coast.

The figure of Sir Josiah Child now enters the lists, a remarkable man who believed 'that the laws of England are a heap of nonsense, compiled by a few ignorant country gentlemen who hardly know how to make laws for the good government of their families, much less for the regulating of companies and foreign commerce'. But for all his purchase, and extensive bribery, his commercial rivals—offering the government a loan of £2,000,000 at eight per cent—were given a charter to start a rival company, and the New English Company was founded in 1698.

In Bombay, a curious rebellion took place. The commandant, one Richard Keigwin, driven by the pettiness of his merchant superiors, occupied the fort and proclaimed Bombay directly under the rule of the King of England. Keigwin reorganized the administration and defence of the island so effectively that the Mughals took no action against him, nor did the

The European Infiltration

Marathas. Keigwin finally surrendered the island to a fleet sent from England. The result of his rebellion was the removal of the Company's headquarters from Surat to Bombay.

To Sir Josiah Child is credited a remark that has often been quoted, that the Company should begin to lay 'the foundations of a large, well-grounded, sure English Dominion in India for all time to come'.

The most apposite comment on this grandiloquent prophecy was made by two modern English historians, Thompson and Garratt.

'Part of a sovereign State's prerogative is waging war. In 1686, over a quarrel about customs dues in Bengal, war was superbly declared against the whole Mughal Empire and ten armed vessels and six hundred men were sent to effect the conquest. The first achievement was an indirect one, the temporary ruin of the Company's status in Bengal.'

In Bengal, it was impossible to trade on the coast, and the Company's establishments were inland, replete with the difficulties of customs barriers and the demands of local officials. *Firmans* had been acquired from the rulers of Bengal in 1651 and 1672, and in 1680 from Aurangzeb himself, relieving them from customs dues, but even *firmans* are useless against provincial corruption when the central authority is weak.

The English, under Job Charnock, were, after war had broken out, forced to abandon their conquests and their factories, but Charnock made an agreement with Aurangzeb. The English had successfully destroyed Mughal shipping and Aurangzeb's treaty of 1690 was a fairly mild one. Charnock later returned to what is now Calcutta. In 1696 the English were permitted to erect a fort which in 1699, in honour of the king of England, was named Fort William. In 1700, Bengal became an independent Presidency.

The New English Company which had been formed in 1698 sent a separate ambassador to Aurangzeb, but failed to acquire the right to trade. Under pressure from the English government the two companies finally amalgamated in 1708-9 as the 'United Company of Merchants of England Trading to the East Indies'. Their monopoly survived intact until 1793.

In 1715 the Company sent an embassy to the Mughal court in order to secure trade privileges throughout Mughal territory as well as the lease of some villages around Fort William. The embassy was successful, as a result possibly of the curing of the Emperor Farrukhsiyar of a painful disease by an English surgeon, William Hamilton, who accompanied the mission. Though the villages in Bengal were not granted, Calcutta—now growing around Fort William—had by 1735 a population of over 100,000 and substantial trade.

In 1664, the French government established the 'Compagnie des Indes Orientales' and this Company established its first factory at Surat in 1668 and another at Masulipatam in the following year. The French had a very difficult time between the rivalries of Dutch and English. In 1674 Pondicherry was established, and in 1690-2 Chandernagore in Bengal. But by the beginning of the eighteenth century French resources were almost exhausted and until the Company's reconstitution in 1720, it merely hung on, even selling its trading licences to others. Until 1742, French settlements prospered. After that date, Dupleix dreamed the same dreams as Josiah Child—the stage was set for the struggle for that dominion.

PRINCIPAL DATES

A.D.	Fall of Constantinople to the Turks
1453	Vasco da Gama at Calicut
1448	Albuquerque, Portuguese Governor in India
1509-15	Portuguese capture Goa
1510	Death of Bahadur Shah of Gujarat
1537	Death of Guru Nanak
1538	Inquisition established at Goa
1540	Death of Humayun and accession of Akbar
1556	Second battle of Panipat
1561	Mughal invasion of Malwa
1562	Akbar marries a princess of Amber and assumes real power
1571	Foundation of Fathpur Sikri
1572	Akbar annexes Gujarat
1576	Subjugation of Bengal
1577	Akbar's troops invade Khandesh
1580	First Jesuit mission at Agra
1581	Akbar's march against Muhammad Hakim and reconciliation with him
1582	Divine Faith promulgated
1585	Death of Muhammad Hakim and annexation of Kabul
	Ralph Fitch at Agra
1586	Annexation of Kashmir
1591	Mughal conquest of Sind
1592	Annexation of Orissa
1595	Siege of Ahmadnagar
	Annexation of Baluchistan
1600	Charter to the London East India Company
	Ahmadnagar stormed
1602	Formation of United East India Company of the Netherlands
1605	Death of Akbar and accession of Jahangir
1606	Rebellion of Khusru
	Execution of the fifth Sikh Guru, Arjun

Principal Dates

201

1609	Hawkins arrives at Agra The Dutch open factory at Pulicat
1611	Jahangir marries Nur Jahan Hawkins leaves Agra The English establish factory at Masulipatam
1612	Khurram marries Mumtaz Mahal First English factory at Surat
1615	Submission of Mewar to the Mughals Arrival of Sir Thomas Roe in India
1616	Roe received by Jahangir The Dutch establish a factory at Surat
1618	Roe, after obtaining <i>firman</i> s for English trade, leaves imperial court
1619	Roe leaves India
1622	Death of Khusru Shah Abbas of Persia besieges and takes Kandahar Khurram ordered to recover Kandahar, but rebels
1624	Suppression of Khurram's rebellion
1625	Dutch factory at Chinsura
1626	Rebellion of Mahabat Khan
1627	Death of Jahangir Birth of Sivaji (or 1630, according to some sources)
1628	Shah Jahan (Khurram) proclaimed Emperor
1630	Mughal invasion of Bijapur
1631	Death of Mumtaz Mahal
1632	Sack of Hugli Mughal occupation of Ahmadnagar
1634	<i>Firman</i> permitting English trade in Bengal
1636	Aurangzeb appointed Viceroy of the Deccan
1639	Foundation of Fort St George at Madras
1651	English factory started at Hugli <i>Firman</i> granted to the English Company in Bengal
1653	Aurangzeb reappointed Viceroy of the Deccan
1658	Coronation of Aurangzeb
1659	Captivity of Shah Jahan
1660	Mir Jumla appointed Governor of Bengal
1661	Cession of Bombay to the English
1663	Death of Mir Jumla Shaista Khan appointed Governor of Bengal

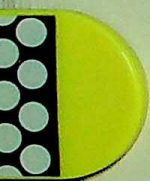
The European Infiltration

202

- 1664 Sivaji sacks Surat
Colbert, the French Minister, founds an India Company
- 1666 Death of Shah Jahan
Capture of Chittagong
Sivaji's visit to Agra and escape
- 1668 Cession of Bombay to the East India Company
First French factory started at Surat
- 1670 Second sack of Surat
- 1672 Shaista Khan's *firman* to the English Company in Bengal
- 1674 François Martin founds Pondicherry
- 1675 Execution of Tegh Bahadur, ninth Guru of the Sikhs
- 1678 Marwar occupied by the Mughals
Death of Jaswant Singh
- 1680 Death of Sivaji
Aurangzeb's *firman* to the English Company
- 1681 Rebellion of Prince Akbar
Aurangzeb goes to the Deccan
- 1686 English at war with the Mughals
Fall of Bijapur
- 1687 Fall of Golconda
- 1689 Execution of Sambhuji
- 1690 Peace between the Mughals and the English
- 1698 The New English Company trading to the East Indies
- 1699 Fort William at Calcutta
- 1707 Death of Aurangzeb
Accession of Bahadur Shah
- 1708 Death of Guru Gobind Singh
- 1708-9 Amalgamation of the English and London East India Companies
- 1712 Death of Bahadur Shah
Accession of Jahandar Shah
- 1713 Farrukhsiyar becomes Emperor
Jahandar Shah murdered
- 1719 Accession of Muhammad Shah
Farrukhsiyar put to death
- 1720 Accession of Baji Rao Peshwa
- 1739 Nadir Shah takes Delhi

Part Four

THE STRUGGLE FOR EMPIRE



I

The Foundations of British Power

I

ENGLISH AND FRENCH CONFLICT IN THE CARNATIC

THE PERIOD THAT we are about to enter is a curious one. It is a time of conflict not only between France and England but between trade and politics. For the first time on a major scale, military and political events in Europe penetrate the lives of the Indian people in no uncertain manner: the future of men who knew nothing of the white man's world was to be subject to the dynastic ambitions and political intrigues of the nations of Western Europe.

Despite the unwillingness of the two trading companies to damage their business by fighting each other, they were forced into hostilities by the actions of royal naval squadrons of both sides. The War of the Austrian Succession, which broke out in 1740, gave the excuse for an English fleet to attack and capture French shipping. Dupleix, the Governor of the French post at Pondicherry, appealed first to the Nawab of the Carnatic, who refused to act except to warn the British not to attack Pondicherry and then, more effectively, to La Bourdonnais, Governor of Mauritius. The result was the siege and capture of Madras, which can hardly be said to have been defended at all.

A treaty was agreed with La Bourdonnais but disowned by Dupleix, who occupied Madras. An appeal by the English to the Nawab brought a large army. But a small French force defeated it—a salutary example which was not to be overlooked.

The French fleet, having been damaged by a hurricane, returned to Mauritius. In June 1748 a large English naval force appeared, and it was the turn of the English to besiege Pondicherry. However, their inferior military skill saved Dupleix and the monsoon forced the withdrawal of the English fleet. Before the war could be resumed, peace was signed in Europe. Madras was restored to the English and the fleet returned to Europe.

However, Dupleix was intriguing with local rulers in an endeavour to encircle the British. The lesson of the defeat of the forces of the Nawab of the Carnatic was not lost on him, and he saw that by backing one ruler

The Struggle for Empire

206

against another he would emerge in strong alliance with one or more of them. His opportunity came in the confused situation in the Deccan which followed the death of the king, the Nizam-ul-mulk, Asaf Jah, in 1748. Though succeeded by his son, Mir Muhammad Nasir Jang, his grandson Muzaffar Jang claimed the throne on the grounds that the Mughal Emperor had appointed him *Subadar* (Governor) of the Deccan.

Dupleix came to a secret arrangement with Muzaffar Jang and also with Chanda Sahib, a claimant to the throne of Arcot. The English ineffectively attempted to form an alliance against them. Nasir Jang was killed, and Muzaffar Jang became ruler of the Deccan. The French were rewarded by Dupleix's being made Governor of the Mughal territories south of the Krishna, and the ceding of Pondicherry and Masulipatam. In return, the Nizam received a French army. The reigning Nawab of Arcot was also defeated and Chanda Sahib made ruler in his place.

Though this was a great achievement of Dupleix, his very success was a political blunder. The English could not accept as their overlord another foreign trader. Their candidate for the throne of Arcot, Muhammad Ali, was besieged at Trichinopoly; the English fleet had gone home. Dupleix seemed invincible. However, a vigorous President had been appointed to Madras.

By superior diplomacy, Dupleix was kept in negotiation with Muhammad Ali in Trichinopoly while Robert Clive marched against Arcot, captured it and for fifty-three days held the city against a besieging force.

The next step was to move against the French general besieging Trichinopoly. He was defeated. Dupleix continued his intrigues, and winning neutrality from the rulers of Mysore and Tanjore, again attacked Trichinopoly. But enemies at home defeated Dupleix by replacing him. His successor reversed his policy and concluded a treaty with the English, which included an agreement that neither side would interfere in the affairs of native princes.

The dream of Dupleix was shattered by the failure of his own government to appreciate the extent of his plans. To the home authorities, India was a minor theatre of operations that for no purpose might prejudice its European ambitions. Dupleix also failed to realize that intrigue can be practised by both sides; and he was hamstrung by incompetent generals on his own side and the military genius of Clive on the other. But because of Dupleix, there was nearly a French Empire in India, and certainly because of him there was an English one.

II

THE ENGLISH IN BENGAL

In 1753, Clive had returned to England but, disappointed of gaining a seat in Parliament, he returned to India in 1755 to find the French and English at peace.

In Bengal, the Nawab, Alivardi Khan, realizing the power of the English made no move against them, but events in the south turned him against the French. On his death in 1756, the Nawab was succeeded by his adopted heir, Siraj-ud-daula—an important name in the mythology of British India.

The English had begun to fortify Calcutta, ostensibly against the French, and had also continued to intrigue with Siraj-ud-daula's enemies. A demand to cease work was sent to both the French and English. The latter refused, reminding the Nawab, rather foolishly, of what had happened in the Deccan. The Nawab attacked Calcutta and the Fort surrendered to him, having been deserted by the Governor. Those that remained were imprisoned in what later became known as 'The Black Hole of Calcutta', one of the few episodes in the history of India known to present-day Englishmen. That such an episode took place is undoubtedly true; that it has been remembered is the result of selective propaganda.

Nevertheless, when the news reached Madras an expedition under Clive was sent, and in January 1757 Calcutta was recovered and a treaty signed with the Nawab.

News then reached Bengal of the outbreak of the Seven Years War. Rather naturally, the Nawab favoured the French, but after some ingenious diplomacy the English, acting apparently with the Nawab's authority, captured the French settlement of Chandernagore.

The situation in Bengal now brought out the real unpleasantness in Clive's character. The Nawab was becoming hysterical in his hatred of the British. This in itself should be perfectly acceptable after the treatment he had received at their hands. However, he also alienated the Hindu community in its most sensitive element by threatening bankers with forcible conversion to Islam. It is never wise to antagonize the financial power, especially if no reliance can be placed upon the army. A conspiracy was formed to place a discontented official, Mir Jafar, on the throne.

Negotiations were opened with Clive. Omichand, the intermediary, was bribed with promises contained in a paper bearing the signatures of Clive and the naval commander, Admiral Watson. Both these signatures were

The Struggle for Empire

208

written by Clive, in whose ambition such a petty thing as forgery no longer held moral significance.

Clive marched against the Nawab on 23 June 1757, and defeated the Nawab's forces at Plassey. Clive's forces numbered 800 Europeans and 2,200 Indians, the Nawab's a disorganized and disaffected 50,000. The battle was mainly settled by artillery and a section of the Nawab's forces under Mir Jafar merely looked on and took no part. The casualties were 65 for the British and 500 for the Nawab. As a battle Plassey was ridiculous. The political results of this minor skirmish were immense. The English Company became the landlord (*zemindar*) of the Twenty-Four Parganas, nearly nine hundred square miles of territory south of Calcutta, with substantial rents. Clive received a 'gift' of £234,000 and others lesser sums. Mir Jafar now became Nawab.

The Dutch, seeing the trends in Bengal, made an attempt to back their claims to trade, with force, but their expedition from Batavia was defeated.

The position of the English in Bengal was now supreme, though on the surface little had changed since the times of Siraj-ud-daula. The new Nawab was, however, merely a puppet. The situation remained reasonably stable until Clive's departure for England in 1760. His successor as acting Governor, Holwell—a survivor of the 'Black Hole'—wished to take over the direct administration of the country, as the death of the Nawab's son a short time before Clive's departure had raised problems of succession. This was not agreed by the Council nor by the permanent Governor, Vansittart, and it was decided that support would be given to the Nawab's son-in-law Mir Kasim. However, the Nawab would not agree to the appointment of Mir Kasim as his deputy. The Nawab was then deposed and Mir Kasim assumed the throne.

The new Nawab had no intention of remaining a puppet in the hands of the English, and began to interfere in the Company's trade. This he had every reason to do. As a genuine patriot, and intelligent ruler, he could see the essential revenue of the State disappearing in the monopoly of duty-free trade demanded by the English as their right. They based their claim on a *firman* from the Mughal Emperor which in fact related only to trade at sea-ports and not the transit of goods inland. Because of this assumption of duty-free goods the English, both as a Company and as individuals, could undersell native merchants, and soon built up dangerous monopolies which brought no revenue to the State but immense profits to their operators.

In 1765, a group of native landowners actually had the courage to petition the Company, complaining that

'the Factories of English gentlemen are many and their *Gomastahs* [agents] are placed in all and in every Village almost throughout the

Province of Bengal; That they trade in Linnen, Chunam, Mustardseed, Tobacco, Turmerick, Oil, Rice, Hemp, Gunnies, Wheat, in short in all Kinds of Grain, Linnen, and whatever other Commodities are produced in the Country; That in order to purchase these Articles, they force their Money on the *ryots* [peasants], and having by these oppressive means bought their goods at a low Rate, they oblige the Inhabitants and Shopkeepers to take them at an high price, exceeding what is paid in the Markets; That they do not pay the Customs due to the *Sircar* [government], but are guilty of all manner of seditious and injurious acts, for Instance. . . . There is now scarce anything of worth left in the country.'

The Nawab, finding protests unavailing, declared all trade duty-free. The English reply was to send troops against him. Mir Kasim and his ally, the Nawab of Oudh, were defeated at Buxar in October 1764—the real foundation-battle of British dominion in India. To the victors fell one unexpected spoil—the titular Mughal Emperor, Shah Alam, who was with the army ranged against the British. One Englishman had disapproved so strongly and openly of the whole affair that he was forced to leave for home in 1765—this man was Warren Hastings.

By the battle of Buxar the Company ceased to be a company of merchants engaged in 'quiet trade'. It had become, though it preferred not to admit it openly, 'the most formidable commercial republic . . . known in the world since the demolition of Carthage'.

The Growth of Direct Rule

I

THE DUAL SYSTEM

IN 1765, CLIVE RETURNED to India. The Company had begun to realize that the affairs of Bengal contributed nothing to the Company's income, while costing a great deal in military expenditure. The Company's servants were now required to sign covenants agreeing not to accept bribes or indulge in private trade.

Clive made peace with the Mughal Emperor and from him received the *diwani* (civil administration) of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. Though the Emperor was a shadow, immense prestige came from his conferring such titles. In exchange he received a handsome allowance. Nevertheless, Clive did not take over the administration directly, not wishing further to antagonize the Dutch and the French nor to become involved in having to support the pretensions of the Emperor. The administration was seemingly still in the hands of the Nawab and his ministers.

Clive's political aims are briefly and succinctly displayed in a document of introduction delivered to the Calcutta Board in January 1767.

'The first point in Politics which I offer to your Consideration is the Form of Government. We are sensible that since the Acquisition of the Dewanni, the Power formerly belonging to the Soubah of these Provinces is Totally, in Fact, vested in the East India Company. . . . Nothing remains to him but the Name and Shadow of Authority. This Name, however, this Shadow, it is indispensibly necessary we should seem to venerate; every Mark of Distinction and Respect must be shown him, and he himself encouraged to shew his Resentment upon the least want of Respect from other Nations. Under the Sanction of a Soubah every encroachment that may be attempted by Foreign Powers can effectually be crushed without any apparent Interposition of our own Authority; and all real Grievances complained of by them, can, through the same channel, be examined into and redressed. Be it therefore always remembered that there is a Soubah, that we have allotted him a Stipend, which must be regularly paid, in support of his Dignity, and that

The Dual System

211

though the Revenues belong to the Company, the territorial Jurisdiction must still rest in the Chiefs of the Country acting under him and this Presidency in Conjunction.'

In regard to the activities of the English, Clive behaved with the moral enthusiasm of a reformed rake, and was driven by this unaccustomed zeal for purity to describe Calcutta as

'one of the most wicked Places in the Universe, Corruption, Licentiousness & a want of Principle seem to have possess'd the minds of all the Civil Servants, by frequent bad Examples they have grown callous, Rapacious & Luxurious beyond Conception, & the Incapacity & Iniquity of some & the Youth of others. . . .'

Clive abolished the abuses of private trade, but substituted a monopoly in salt for the benefit of senior civil and military officers. This was disapproved of by the Directors in London and abolished.

Clive returned to England for good in February 1767. His character has been the subject of wide polemic. One history written by Indian historians has lauded his 'tact and patience, industry and foresight' and maintained that 'in him, we find a happy combination of high idealism and sound practical commonsense'. Another, more recently, has called him 'a gangster who had achieved glory, a confessed forger, liar, and cheat, whose military achievements compared to the generals of the time were wholly ridiculous'. The truth is somewhere in between. His administration, as the present author has written elsewhere,

'was rascally and immoral by standards imposed on him by the Victorian coiners of improving proverbs and moral tales. Some of his actions were bad by any standards, even those of his own times. But empires are not constructed with kid-gloves, nor made to the measurements of moral laws. . . . He was an empire-builder without scruples, but he did not practise dissimulation and deceit by pretending he was otherwise; and, as Mountstuart Elphinstone wrote: "In a life spent amid scenes of blood and suffering, he has never been accused of a single act of cruelty."'

In the present time, with cruelty and indifference, self-seeking and oppression as a part of our personal experience and the background to every newspaper headline, we can afford to view Clive's administration rather more objectively.

Clive's successors revealed by their incompetence the evils inherent in the Dual System of rule. Oppression and exploitation were aggravated, in 1770,

The Struggle for Empire

212

by a disastrous famine. Richard Becher reported to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors in 1769 that

'this fine Country, which flourished under the most despotic and arbitrary Government, is verging towards its Ruin while the English have really so great a share in the Administration. . . . When the English received the Grant of the Dewannee their first Consideration seems to have been the raising of as large Sums from the Country as could be collected, to answer the pressing demands from home and to defray the large Expences here.'

II

THE RENEWAL OF CONFLICT IN THE SOUTH

By the terms of the Treaty of Paris (1763), England and France recognized the Nizam Salabat Jang of Hyderabad as 'Subadar of the Deccan' and Muhammad Ali as the Nawab of the Carnatic. As Mark Wilks wrote in his *History of Mysoor*: 'Two European nations had thus assumed to themselves the right of conferring the official appointments and determining the interior arrangement of the Mogul [Mughal] Empire.' Muhammad Ali, an outrageous protégé of an outrageous English Company, kept the Carnatic in a state of anarchy and corruption, demanding and receiving military aid from the Company's forces to further his own personal ambitions.

Muhammad Ali's brother left on a pilgrimage to Mecca. He took 'an unusually circuitous route which brought him to Haidar Ali' who now ruled Mysore. Here he gave up his pilgrimage for mundane reward as an adviser to Haidar. A situation of almost improbable farce now developed. The Nizam, a rather reluctant ally of the British, could not make up his mind which side he should take. Muhammad Ali planned to succeed both the Nizam and Haidar—they, in turn, thought the world would be a better place without him. The Marathas, recovering from their defeat by the Afghans and the Mughals at Panipat, were now active in South India. In these circumstances, no one was quite sure who was fighting whom. The uncertainty reached a climax when a British force, whose commander thought he was supporting the Nizam, found itself actually fighting the Nizam and Haidar Ali together. This, however, did not prevent the English from winning the battle.

Unfortunately, at that time Haidar's son Tipu was ravaging the suburbs of Madras. Though the Nizam, after some wavering, ensured the continuance of his dynasty (and received the rather dubious title of 'Faithful Ally') by the Treaty of Masulipatam in 1768, Haidar and Tipu were able to dictate

their own terms to the English at Madras. The Company, which was enmeshed in a web of conflicting and bewildering commitments, offered Haidar their support against attack. When it came, however (from the Marathas in 1771), they were in no position to fulfil their promise, and made for themselves implacable enemies in Haidar and his son.

III

THE COMPANY STANDS FORTH AS DIWAN

Hastings, who had returned to India as second in authority at Madras in 1769, was appointed Governor of Bengal in 1772. His instructions were to 'stand forth as Diwan'—that is to say, take over the administration directly without hiding behind the fiction of the Nawab's rule. This was to be done by a sort of political trial of a kind we are more familiar with in the twentieth century. The *Naibs* (ministers) who had ruled ostensibly on behalf of the Nawab, but in fact as front-men for the English, were to be prosecuted and deposed for corruption and oppression. Hastings was also told to use Nandakumar (Nuncomar), former Naib, in this outrageous affair. The Directors' dispatch is well worth quoting from, as an indication of how far a mere trading venture had come in a hundred and fifty years.

'We cannot forbear recommending you to avail yourself of the intelligence which Nuncomar may be able to give respecting the [present] Naib's administration; and while the envy which Nuncomar is supposed to bear this minister may prompt him to a ready communication of all proceedings which have come to his knowledge, we are persuaded that no scrutable part of the Naib's conduct can have escaped the watchful eye of his jealous and penetrating rival. Hence we cannot doubt that the abilities and disposition of Nuncomar may be successfully employed in the investigation of Mahomed Rheza Khan's administration, and bring to light any embezzlement, fraud, or malversation which he may have committed in the office of Naib Dewan, or in the station he has held under the several successive Subahs; and while we assure ourselves that you will make the necessary use of Nuncomar's intelligence, we have such confidence in your wisdom and caution, that we have nothing to fear from any secret motives or designs which may induce him to detect the mal-administration of one whose power has been the object of his envy, and whose office the aim of his ambition; for we have the satisfaction to reflect that you are too well apprised of the subtlety and disposition of Nuncomar to yield him any post of authority which may be

The Struggle for Empire

214

turned to his own advantage, or prove detrimental to the Company's interest. Though we have thought it necessary to intimate to you how little we are disposed to delegate any power or influence to Nuncomar, yet, should his information and assistance be serviceable to you in your investigation of the conduct of Mahomed Rheza Khan, you will yield him such encouragement and reward as his trouble and the extent of his services may deserve.'

However, it must be recorded, and it is merely one of the many paradoxes in the history of the British in India, that the trial resulted in the acquittal of the Naibs. The reason may well have been that the distaste of Hastings for the whole proceedings ensured a truthful result. Whatever the result, the effect was the same—the administration no longer hid behind the Nawab.

It must not be thought that the removal of the mask meant direct British-controlled administration. On the contrary, it must be acknowledged that the British occupation of Bengal was a surface occupation supported by military strength, and its administration was that of an *Indian* power using indigenous methods of government.

Hastings found these methods in what can only be described as chaos. The Mughal system of revenue-collecting had collapsed. Bengal, by the nature of its land, had encouraged the diffusion of agriculture into areas almost inaccessible except to river traffic. The collection of revenue was therefore difficult and no attempt, as in the village communities of Bombay and Madras, was made to make a direct assessment through salaried officials. In Bengal, the revenue-farmer remained. Hastings failed to create an alternative. The appointment of 'supervisors' and, later, 'collectors', of young Englishmen who knew nothing of what they were supposed to be doing and cared less, only led to further confusion and, for the peasant, an unnecessary addition to his suffering, already heavy through landlords and famine.

These incompetent 'collectors' were superseded by Revenue Boards which were no more successful. In 1776 a Metropolitan Revenue Board was established. Its effect was decisive and disastrous, for landowners who defaulted on revenue payments were to have their land sold. This introduced a conception of land entirely alien to the Indian tradition. That land in India could be mortgaged, bought, and sold in the European way like any other commodity, was to have incalculable effects on the traditional fabric of Indian society. These acts were carried out with the very best of intentions. Hastings was genuinely concerned with the happiness of the people. His Directors, however, were only interested in the 'investment', the exercise of a lucrative patronage in appointments, and the firm belief that India existed to supply wealth and nothing more.

Continually harassed by mean minds, Hastings was the unhappy victim of his predecessors' misrule. His first act was to cut down the expenses of administration. The allowance paid to the Mughal Emperor in return for the *diwani* was stopped. Shah Alam was now the prisoner of the Marathas, and Hastings did not see why he should subsidize a powerful potential enemy. The revenues of the Nawab of Bengal were also cut. The districts of Kora and Allahabad were sold to the Nawab of Oudh.

Hastings next established Courts of Appeal in Calcutta, but apart from these Muslim criminal law was left in force. Muslim law was comparatively easy-going but its punishments, when given, included mutilation and impalement.

In 1773, Hastings, looking towards a stable frontier against the Marathas, lent the Nawab of Oudh a brigade of troops in order to annex Rohilkhand. The Rohillas, an Afghan tribe which had occupied the area some thirty-five years earlier, were defeated. This hiring-out of troops was subject to much criticism and Hastings's action has been a plaything for historians ever since. His action is indefensible on moral grounds. In terms of eighteenth-century statesmanship it was intelligent and justified. In the interests of the growing British dominion in India, it was inevitable.

The Company and the Crown

I

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL IN COUNCIL

BY 1772, THE FINANCIAL STATE of the East India Company was such that, failing to extract a loan from the Bank of England, it approached the government with a request for a million pounds.

A Committee of Investigation was appointed by Parliament, and its startling disclosures of the 'presents' received by the Company's servants between 1757 and 1766 led to the Regulating Act of 1773.

Hastings became Governor-General in Bengal with authority over Bombay and Madras, though how this was to be exercised remained obscure. A Supreme Court, consisting of a Chief Justice and three Judges was to be set up. In England, the Directors were to supply to Parliament copies of all their correspondence and half-yearly accounts. These were the most important clauses of the Act, which was the foundation of British rule in India.

The most sinister provision was that for a Supreme Court. Hastings welcomed it with the remark that 'if the Lord Chief Justice and his judges should come amongst us with their institutes, the Lord have mercy upon us'. However, the Supreme Court was established and with it a system of punishment which prescribed the death-penalty for such things as stealing five shillings.

The dangerous inapplicability of English law, the product of a social system so alien to India, was demonstrated in the case of the Raja Nandakumar. The Raja, intriguing against Hastings because of his dissatisfaction with the results of the trial of the Naibs, accused the Governor-General of corruptly receiving gifts. Hastings refused to discuss it in Council and he and another member, Barwell, prosecuted Nandakumar for conspiracy. While he was awaiting trial, a private individual (an Indian) charged him with forgery. Nandakumar was convicted and, despite protests, hanged. Two results emerged. On the one hand, no-one would believe that it was not a judicial murder arranged by Hastings, on the other it was now obvious that the British really ruled in Bengal—for forgery was not a part of the native criminal code, and to hang a Brahmin was an act of sacrilege.

Hastings's position in his own Council was precarious. Of its four members only one supported him, but on the death of two and the going home of a third, he was able at last to carry out his administration without interference.

II

THE FIRST WAR WITH THE MARATHAS

It was inevitable that the growing power of the English would come into conflict with the Marathas. The cause, however, was not altogether the expected one—the impact of two conquerors seldom is. The English in Bombay, weak and exposed to attack, had long coveted the island of Salsette and the port of Bassein. In 1774, the Peshwa of the Marathas was assassinated and his uncle, Raghunath Rao, assumed power. Unfortunately for him, a son was born posthumously to the late Peshwa and Raghunath Rao was displaced. He then approached various powers, including the Company, and convinced them that they should support him. But he was not prepared to sacrifice Salsette and Bassein for aid. Salsette was then taken by the Company's forces, and Raghunath persuaded to endorse the seizure by treaty.

His people, however, being attached to their sea-board, refused to accept the arrangement and the Company found itself at war. It just managed to win a battle at Aras. Hastings then stepped in and his Council insisted on making peace. The Directors in London refused to accept the new treaty, ordering Hastings to 'forthwith adopt such measures as may be necessary for their [Salsette and Bassein's] preservation and defence'. Hastings did not altogether approve but by 1778 had taken a different attitude: a French army was already at Poona, the capital of the Maratha Confederacy, and in the same year war had broken out between England and France in Europe.

A weak Bombay force marched against Poona but was forced to submit to terms with the Marathas. These terms were rejected by Calcutta and Hastings sent an army marching across India from the Jumna to Bombay. Its commander, Colonel Goddard, occupied Ahmadabad and Gujarat, but foolishly made a dash for Poona and was severely mauled by Maratha forces. A force under Popham, which had also been sent from Bengal, in alliance with the Raja of Gohad captured Gwalior, the fortress of Sindhia who had long been aiming at the leadership of the Marathas and who was personally defeated at Sipri (Sivpur) in 1781 by an English force under Colonel Carnac.

The effect of these victories was to lead to negotiations between Sindhia

and the Maratha leader Nana Fadnavis and the British, which resulted in the Treaty of Salbai. This gave both the Marathas and the British nearly twenty years of peace to prepare themselves for the next stage in the struggle for power.

III

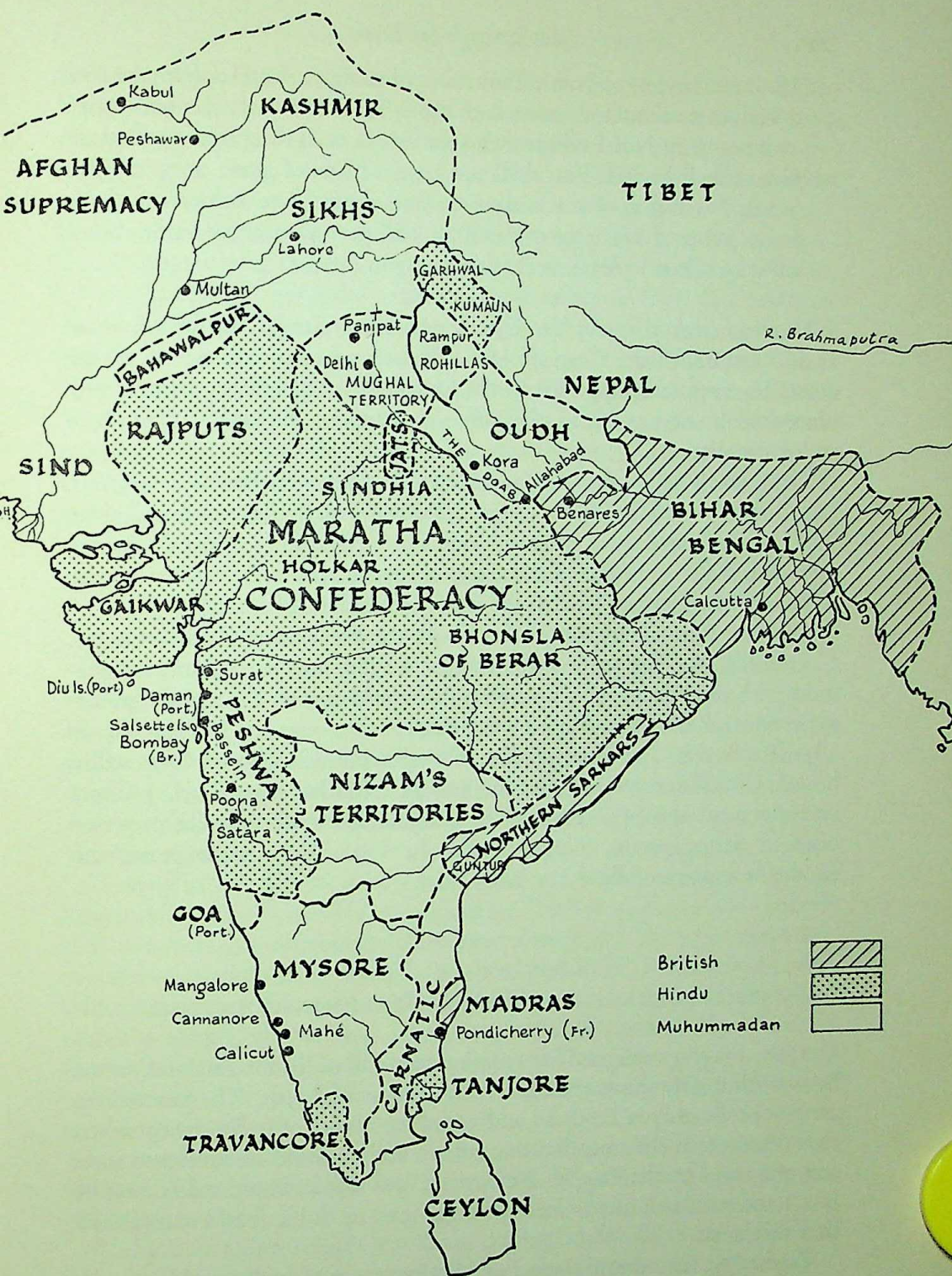
THE WAR AGAINST MYSORE

As we have seen (p. 213), when the Marathas invaded the territories of Haidar Ali, the Company despite its pledges did not go to his aid, and in 1779 he joined a confederacy with Nizam Ali, now ruling in the Deccan, and the Marathas against the British. In 1780, Haidar swept into the Carnatic with an immense army. Edmund Burke has left a famous description of it.

'He drew from every quarter whatsoever a savage ferocity could add to his new rudiments in the art of destruction; and compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation into one black cloud, he hung for a while on the declivities of the mountains. Whilst the authors of all these evils were idly and stupidly gazing on this menacing meteor, which blackened all their horizon, it suddenly burst, and poured down the whole of its contents upon the plains of the Carnatic. Then ensued a scene of woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived, and which no tongue can adequately tell. All the horrors of war before known or heard of were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants fleeing from their flaming villages, in part were slaughtered; others, without regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank, or sacredness of function—fathers torn from children, husbands from wives—enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, and amidst the goading spears of drivers, and the trampling of pursuing horses, were swept into captivity in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to escape this tempest, fled to the walled cities; but escaping from fire, sword, and exile they fell into the jaws of famine.'

The people nevertheless welcomed Haidar as preferable (which he was) to the Nawab of the Carnatic Muhammad Ali. A fantastic situation now evolved. A force under Sir Hector Munro was seized with panic, threw its guns into a lake and fled to Madras when only two miles from a force it had been sent to relieve.

Haidar also refused to engage in pitched battles on Western lines, and in reply to a letter from a British commander, he said



INDIA IN 1772

The Struggle for Empire

220

'You will in time understand my mode of warfare. Shall I risk my cavalry, which cost a thousand rupees each horse, against your cannon ball which cost two *pice*? No! I will march your troops until their legs swell to the size of their bodies. You shall not have a blade of grass, nor a drop of water. I will hear of you every time your drum beats, but you shall not know where I am once a month. I will give your army battle, but it must be when I please, and not when you choose.'

Hastings hurriedly sent Sir Eyre Coote from Bengal but by this time Haidar controlled the Carnatic and a French naval squadron was off the coast. Hastings even appealed to the Dutch for help, offering them a province which was not his to give, but war between England and Holland ended negotiations.

The French squadron, despite Haidar's entreaties, retired to Mauritius, and Coote defeated the Mysore armies at Porto Novo, Polilor and Sholinghur. The French landed three thousand men and a naval force under de Suffren appeared. After a number of indecisive engagements a truce was made with Tipu, who had succeeded after the death of Haidar Ali in 1782.

The new ruler sought for aid from both the French and Constantinople. Cornwallis, who had succeeded Hastings in 1786, now entered into negotiations with the Nizam which could only be offensive to Tipu and contrary to the terms of the truce. Tipu moved first in 1789—against Travancore, an ally of the British. The Raja appealed to Madras but was ignored. Cornwallis, however, in alliance with the Nizam and the Marathas moved against Tipu, and after a number of reverses a force commanded by Cornwallis in person besieged Seringapatam, Tipu's capital, in 1792. Tipu made peace, but another war was to follow in a year's time.

IV

THE RESULTS OF HASTINGS'S ADMINISTRATION

In 1785, Hastings resigned his appointment and sailed for England, where he was ultimately impeached before the House of Lords. The proceedings are part of the story of England and not of the history of India, except where they demonstrate the intention that rule in India should be subject to some sort of control by the English Parliament, and that it should reflect English ideals and standards of political morality, however dubious and inapplicable they might be.

To analyse the administration of Hastings in any detail would not only be tedious but irrelevant to the theme of this book. Certain aspects of it,

however, were of great significance for India: the Supreme Court and its introduction of foreign judicial ideas, and the movement towards a régime of responsibility rather than indifferent exploitation and oppression.

There is a characteristic irony about the reaction of modern Indian historians to Hastings's rule as well as to that of Clive. Denunciations are thundered out against his treatment of the Nawabs, his squeezing of rulers. But his oppressions, and they were many and heavy, were on the great native oppressors and not upon the ordinary people of the country. His administration has been likened to 'such great medieval kings as Henry II, who tamed the barons that the lower orders might begin to have fewer authorities to fear'. Hastings attacked just those princes that independent India hastened to get rid of. Even the aberrations of English Law brought with them a revolutionary concept—the English also were subject to its rules. But this was not as important for the ordinary Indian as the knowledge that *all* were equal before the law—even a Brahmin.

V

THE CONSOLIDATION OF DIRECT RULE

Hastings was succeeded, after a twenty months interregnum under Sir John Macpherson—whose rule was described by his successor as 'a system of the dirtiest jobbery'—by Lord Cornwallis, fresh from his defeats in North America. He brought with him greatly enlarged powers, under Pitt's India Act of 1784, and the prestige of being Commander-in-Chief as well as Governor-General.

Cornwallis established a new era by simply being a great nobleman, incorruptible and efficient. He reorganized the administration and fixed salaries at such a level as to discourage corruption; though for the time being these reforms were confined to Bengal, Madras remaining, as Cornwallis described it, a system 'founded on the good old principles of Leadenhall-street economy—small salaries and immense perquisites, and if the Directors alone could be ruined by it, everybody would say they deserved it, but unfortunately it is not the Court of Directors, but the British nation who must be the sufferers'.

Cornwallis also reorganized the army, which was in a sorry state, 'the contemptible trash of which the Company's European force is composed, makes me shudder'.

We have seen Cornwallis's reaction to the threat from Tipu which resulted in an uneasy truce in 1792. In Oudh and the Carnatic the situation, an unhappy one, remained unchanged. In the rest of India, Sindhia continued

The Struggle for Empire

222

to consolidate his position amongst the Marathas, and employed a French officer to train his troops on European lines—but he was defeated by the Rajputs and in 1788 the titular Mughal Emperor, who was then under the protection of the Marathas, was captured and blinded by an Afghan adventurer. In the next year, Sindhia recovered Delhi and reinstated the Emperor in his shadowy honours. In 1792, Sindhia defeated a rival, Holkar, but died in 1794 before he could consolidate his leadership.

The most important single act of Cornwallis's rule was the Permanent Settlement of land in Bengal, Bihar, and Benares in 1793. It was ill-advised and misconceived. Cornwallis, looking for a 'practical' solution to the collection of revenue, saw only the English system of stable tenure, and confiscation for defaulters. This destroyed the whole tradition of hereditary occupation of land, for what might only be a temporary lack of money. One comment on the land settlement deserves quotation.

'In his endeavour to fix the land-revenues of Bengal upon a firm and profitable footing, Lord Cornwallis perpetrated one of the greatest wrongs, committed one of the most enormous blunders, that is to be found on record. He propounded a scheme by which the proprietary right in the whole soil of Bengal was to be vested in the *zemindars* or hereditary superintendents of land, not for one year, or ten years, but for ever. They had been the farmers of the land-tax for years past; they stood in that capacity between government and the village proprietors and cultivators; but to suppose that therefore they possessed any claim to the land yielding that tax, was a monstrosity reserved for the conception of this very amiable nobleman. The scheme, hollow and unrighteous as it was, seemed to promise such security to the revenue by creating this large class of landed aristocracy by a mere stroke of the pen, that the authorities at home were deceived into compliance, and the fiat went forth by which twenty millions of small landholders were dispossessed of their rights, and handed over, bound hand and foot, to the tender mercies of a set of exacting rack-renters.'

This was written in 1853 by John Capper in his *Three Presidencies of India*.

Whatever the consequences, the Permanent Settlement was a further expression of direct rule.

Under Cornwallis, the higher posts in the administration were reserved to Europeans. This act was not so much a discrimination against Indians as an incentive to a better quality of Englishman to take up posts in India. Nevertheless, Europeanization continued long after the necessity for it had gone. Indians were no longer able to reach positions of authority in a foreign administration, and a new caste of white rulers had been established.

Cornwallis's reforms also made it apparent that the British were unlikely to become absorbed into the Indian political and social structure as the Mughals had been.

Cornwallis also sought to regularize the administration of justice, and English methods of legal interpretation were even applied to Hindu law. The result was a surge of litigation replete with professional informers and witnesses.

Cornwallis was succeeded in 1795 by Sir John Shore, a Company's servant who was described by a friend as 'a good well meaning man, as cold as a dog's nose'. He was, in fact, a typical civil servant, timid and conventional. With his replacement by Wellesley in 1798, a period of comparative peace and consolidation came to an end. The Empire-builders were on the march again.

Economic, Religious, and Social Life in the Eighteenth Century

I

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

THE MOST SERIOUS RESULT of the anarchy that followed the disintegration of the Mughal Empire, and the consequent struggles for power between Indian and European invaders, was the decline of industry. As we have briefly seen, India in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries might justifiably be described as the industrial workshop of the world. It was, however, an industrial economy of a pre-capitalist nature, dependent upon techniques of production particularly susceptible to the breakdown of communications or fluctuations in the desire for luxury goods in its normal outlets. As an export economy, it was also dependent upon the control of the 'carrying trade'.

Because of forces, both of Nature and politics, which are too complicated for explanation here, the larger part of India's industry and agriculture-for-trade was confined to Bengal and its environs. The volume of inland and foreign trade carried on by Hindu, Muslim, and Armenian merchants from Bengal was very great. This trade was a cash transaction and during the period 1708-56 three-quarters of Bengal's *imports* were gold bullion. Apart from cloth, Bengal exported raw silk, sugar, jute, saltpetre, and opium. The inland or coastal trade also brought many other products to Bengal which became an entrepôt for goods from places as far apart as China and East Africa.

Such was the situation before the battle of Plassey. Its consequences were to lead to the destruction of a prosperous industry and trade, and the reduction of the country to poverty.

The enormous sums of money squeezed from rulers during the profitable 'revolutions' engineered by Clive, both for the Company and the private fortunes of its servants, removed from the country the capital wealth necessary for trade. Customs duty on the inland transit of goods was evaded by the English by forced concessions, which in turn were sold for great profit to Indian merchants to enable them also to evade the payment of dues. Prices

were also forced up to increase profits. Mir Kasim's reaction—of abolishing all customs duties—as we have seen, cost him his throne.

This monopoly of trade by the Company and its servants led to the artificial fixing of selling prices, and forward buying, particularly in the cloth industry. The oppression of weavers forced many to desert their craft and by 1767 there was a scarcity of weavers. Cornwallis's attempt to encourage the industry by abolishing oppression was too late to revive it.

The advancement of production techniques in England permitted manufacturers there to undersell Indian products, and the artificial restriction of imports into England ruined the industry irreparably. The Indian home market found itself flooded by the importation of machine-made fabrics from England.

In half a century, the hand-loom weavers of Bengal had been destroyed and the inland trade moved into the hands of the Europeans.

Indigenous capital deprived of industrial outlets was sunk into land, and the grip of European banking and commerce on the trade of the country was established without chance of rivalry.

India was now no longer to be subject only to the physical depredations and political expansion of the invaders, but to the fluctuations of the Industrial Revolution and capitalist expansion in England. A riot in a Manchester slum, the failure of a bank in London, could now mean the destitution of men in Bengal.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, as we shall see, India was to lose the proud position of supremacy in the trade and industry of the world which she had been occupying for well-nigh two thousand years, and was gradually transformed into a plantation for the production of raw materials, and a dumping-ground for the cheap manufactured goods from the West. All the while the government responsible for the welfare of its teeming millions looked on and did not take adequate steps to avert the calamity. And why should it? Exploitation of one sort or another is the nature of conquest, and the British were no different from their predecessors except in the ingenuity of their methods.

As for Bengal, so for the rest of India, whose economy, on a smaller scale and more diffused, was the same: the decay of industry into local crafts and the consequent debasing of standards, and an expansion of agriculture on the most primitive basis.

THE HINDU/MUSLIM SYNTHESIS

We have seen how the interaction of Muslim and Hindu cultures produced an apparent synthesis in the *bhakti* movement and the rise of Sikhism. We have also seen Babur's attempts and Akbar's success in integrating Hindus into the Mughal political structure, and the continuance of Hindus—despite the reaction of later emperors—in the subordinate levels of the administration, in what is a tradition almost unbroken since the time of the Mauryas. Also the Muslim invaders did not bring women with them and the common practice on all levels, of marrying Hindus, introduced Hindu social practices into Muslim households. Patronage was also extended to Hindu scholars. On the level of the villages, those converted to Islam retained the customs of the Hindus.

It is necessary for a conqueror who does not derive his power from outside the area of conquest to assume certain of the *mores* and ceremonial of the conquered, and the early Muslim kings absorbed many of the customs of Hindu rulers. The Muslim also developed a caste system. In India

'caste is in the air, its contagion has spread even to the Muhammadans, and we find its evolution proceeding on characteristically Hindu lines. In both communities foreign descent forms the highest claims to social distinctions and just as in the traditional Hindu system men of the higher groups could marry women of the lower, while the converse process was vigorously condemned, so within the higher ranks of the Muhammadans, a Sayyid will marry a Sheikh's daughter but will not give his daughter in return. The lower functional groups are organized on the model of regular castes, with councils and officers which enforce the observance of caste rules by the time-honoured sanction of boycotting.'

The Hindu caste system in consequence developed an unbending rigidity and even adopted the close seclusion of women (*purdah*) from the Muslims. India was now split vertically as well as horizontally though social intercourse between the two systems was contented and, to a certain extent, uninhibited.

In the matter of clothes, Muslims adopted the Hindu turban, and the Hindus, Muslim dress. The result of this close contact and interchange of customs had led to a sense of solidarity between the two communities. The sources of inter-Indian wars in the eighteenth century were political rather than religious; the sense of 'difference', and antagonisms between the two

communities, were the product of European rule though, as we shall see, the factors involved are rather more complicated than the alleged Original Sin of imperialism.

III

RACIAL RELATIONS

It is important at this stage to examine briefly the social relations of Europeans and Indians, for in them lie many of the roots of early nineteenth-century reform and of the British withdrawal into racial exclusiveness.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the English lived in their factories, ate at a common table, and went out into India as little as possible. Those Indians with whom they had contact were merchants, their agents, servants, and slaves. At Surat, however, placed as they were in a large Indian city and in competition with other European merchants, intercourse was more extensive, business hospitality being then, as now, an integral part of negotiation. Before the middle of the eighteenth century there was no talk of inferiority. As T. G. P. Spear has so well written 'the mutual opinions of Indians and English in the early years were largely compounded of ignorance and prejudice, but they contained in them little trace of racial bias. Europeans and Indians disapproved of each other's social systems, but they had not yet the tolerant pity which comes of a sense of inborn superiority.' When the East India Company began to emerge as a political power, it did so as one amongst Indian powers and as such it was diplomatically effective to behave as one. On such a level of political equality, knowledge of India grew.

Most of this intercourse on the social level was, because of caste difficulties, with Muslims and Parsees. Muhammad Ali, the Nawab of Arcot, was in Madras the centre of social life as well as the eponym of the now forgotten scandal of the 'Nabob of Arcot's debts'.

'A dissatisfied group of creditors daily meet at the Nabob's. No sooner has the sun risen than every avenue to the palace is filled with palanquins and carriages and in the evening the same faces, the same surly looks are to be seen again. The Nabob receives everybody with politeness, apologizes for his want of punctuality (in paying), which he attributes to the loss of Tanjore, and repeats the hackneyed tale of the cruel treatment which he has received at the hands of Lord Pigot [the Governor of Madras].'

The chief Muslim entertainment in the north was at the court of the Nawab-Wazir of Oudh, a three-ring circus of European adventurers.

Hastings was genuinely interested in Indian literature and actively encouraged Oriental studies. This brought him the friendship of princes who were also men of culture. The coming of Cornwallis, however, was the beginning of the end. Bringing with him an Olympian sense of right, his reforms encouraged the withdrawal of the rulers from the common intercourse of equals. The English were *in* the country but were increasingly unwilling to come to terms with it. With the increase in the European population, the prospects of social life with 'one's own people' increased, until, in time, India became an unknown country and the English life of the town the final reality.

PRINCIPAL DATES

A.D.	
1740-8	War of the Austrian Succession
1742-54	Dupleix, Governor of Pondicherry
1744-9	First Anglo-French War
1746	French capture Madras
1748	Death of Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle
1750-4	Second Anglo-French War
1751-2	Sieges of Arcot and Trichinopoly
1756	Ahmad Shah Abdali in Delhi Siraj-ud-daula, Nawab of Bengal
1756-63	Seven Years War
1757	Battle of Plassey
1757-60	Clive's first Governorship
1758-63	Third Anglo-French War
1761-82	Haidar Ali, ruler of Mysore
1763	Treaty of Paris
1764	Battle of Buxar
1765	Grant of <i>diwani</i> of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa to the Company
1765-7	Clive's second Governorship
1771	Marathas attack Haidar Ali
1772-85	Warren Hastings's Governorship
1773	Regulating Act passed
1775-82	First Maratha War
1776	Establishment of Metropolitan Revenue Boards
1780-4	Second Mysore War
1782-98	Tipu Sultan, ruler of Mysore
1784	Pitt's India Act passed. Asiatic Society of Bengal founded
1786-90	Reforms of Cornwallis
1788	Blinding of Shah Alam
1788-95	Impeachment of Warren Hastings
1789-1803	Marathas control Delhi
1790-2	Third Mysore War
1793	Permanent Settlement
1794	Death of Sindhia at Poona
1798	Wellesley becomes Governor-General



Part Five

THE EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION
OF BRITISH DOMINION



I

Political Events from 1798 to the Establishment of Rule by the Crown

NOW THAT WE HAVE REACHED the ante-room of the present, it will be simpler, for the understanding of India in that part of the nineteenth century which culminated in the direct assumption of power by the Crown, to treat political events as a continuous narrative and then briefly to examine the changes in administration, before dealing in some detail with the impact of the spread of British dominion in India and reactions to it. The period falls into three reasonably defined parts: the first a period of expansion, the second a period in which new principles of government were introduced and the foundations of an English system laid, and lastly the annexations which led to the final patterns of British rule, culminating in the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 and the consequent transfer of power to the Crown.

I

FROM WELLESLEY TO AMHERST 1798-1828

In 1798 Lord Mornington, later Marquess of Wellesley, was appointed Governor-General. One modern Indian historian has cursorily dismissed the occupiers of this office as 'from the point of view of the history of the English in India, no doubt important; but in the context of Indian history . . . signify nothing'. This is rather like dismissing Hitler as irrelevant to the history of Europe.

Wellesley was determined on building an Empire and, with the aid of his brother Arthur, later Duke of Wellington, began to do so. They first turned against Tipu in Mysore, which was considered as a likely place for another French invasion into Indian affairs. Tipu had entered into an 'alliance' with the French, for which his rewards were a rabble of a hundred and fifty French volunteers and the dubious appellation of Citizen Tipu. England was at war with France, revolutionary, regicide France, and Tipu's 'negotiations' with the French Governor of Mauritius were ample excuse for attacking him. Despite desperate attempts by Tipu to come to terms,

Wellesley was not to be put off. The Nizam and the Peshwa were forced to fulfil the engagements of their alliance with the British, Seringapatam was taken and Tipu killed. Arthur Wellesley, who had not actually fought in the campaign, was appointed Commandant at Seringapatam—as General Baird, who had led the stormers, put it: ‘before the sweat was dry on my brow, I was superseded by an inferior officer’. Wellesley was granted an annuity of £8,000 by the grateful Directors.

Tipu’s administration of Mysore had been progressive, the peasantry were protected and the country prosperous. Their lot was to change. That part of Mysore which was now handed over to the Nizam, that ‘Faithful Ally’, was to be subjected to his usual methods of collecting revenue.

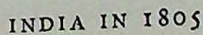
‘The scene which presented itself to the British officer was beyond all description shocking. The different quotas to be paid by each inhabitant had been fixed; and every species of torture was then being inflicted to enforce it. Men and women, poor and rich, were suffering promiscuously. Some had heavy muskets fastened to their ears; some large stones upon their breasts; whilst others had their fingers pinched with hot pincers. Their cries of agony and declarations of inability to pay appeared only to whet the appetite of their tormentors. Most of those not under their hands seemed in a state of starvation. Indeed, they were so far distracted with hunger, that many of them, without distinction of sect, devoured what was left by the European officer and Sepoys from their dinner.’

The British annexed the coasts of Kanara and Malabar, in 1799 Tanjore, and on the death of the Nawab of Arcot, the Carnatic. The old Hindu kingdom of Mysore was restored under a regent.

The Marathas, who had not come to the aid of the British though they probably would have done if the campaign had lasted longer, were now offered a share in the conquered territory, but the conditions were such—the Company’s arbitration in their disputes with the Nizam, and a defence alliance against the French—as were unacceptable to the Peshwa.

Wellesley applied this policy of subsidiary alliance to Hyderabad in 1800 and to Oudh in 1801. This interference in the affairs of Indian States encouraged rule without responsibility—the British contingent of troops, a charge on the State’s revenue, could always be used to protect the ruler against rebellion. Misgovernment and oppression were therefore given licence to expand and continue under the tolerant eye of a governor-general intent upon the extension of British supremacy.

Outside, however, remained the Marathas. In 1794, Sindhia had died and was succeeded by his nephew Daulat Rao. Baji Rao II, who had become Peshwa in 1796, was a ‘master of duplicity and cruelty’. By treachery, the



Peshwa had captured Jaswant Rao Holkar's brother, and had enjoyed himself watching him being trampled to death by an elephant. Jaswant Rao attacked Poona in 1802 and defeated Daulat Rao and the Peshwa, who fled to Bassein and the protection of the British. Here he signed a treaty agreeing to a British Resident in his capital and, in general, a subsidiary position. This was, however, unacceptable to his Maratha chiefs. The war that resulted was a rout for the Marathas, and in 1803 the British victoriously entered Delhi where the blind Emperor Shah Alam still occupied a rather decayed State.

'The courts of the palace were full of people, anxious to witness the deliverance of their sovereign from a state of degradation and bondage. At length the Commander-in-Chief [Lord Lake] was ushered into the royal presence, and found the unfortunate venerable Emperor, oppressed by the accumulated calamities of old age, degraded authority, extreme poverty, and loss of sight, seated under a small tattered canopy, the remnant of his royal State, with every external appearance of the misery of his condition.'

If the Emperor entertained any notion that the British intended to re-establish the Mughal Empire, he was mistaken. Wellesley was pleased to indulge in rhetoric for the Directors in England, and talked of the capturing of Delhi as 'delivering the unfortunate and aged Emperor Shah Alam, and the royal house of Timour, from misery, degradation, and bondage', but in fact his instructions were that such 'regard should be paid to the comfort and convenience of his majesty and the royal family as was consistent with the due security of their persons'.

Shah Alam, however, appears to have taken his part in this play of empty phrases, for

'In addition to other marks of royal condescension and favour, the Emperor was graciously pleased to confer on General Lake the second title in the Empire, "Sumsam-u-Dowlah, Ashgar-ul-Moolk, Khan Dowran Khan, General Gerald Lake Behauder, Futteh Jung"—the Sword of the State, the Hero of the Land, the Lord of the Age, and the Victorious in War".'

In 1804, Holkar, who had not taken part in the war, attacked the English in Rajputana and defeated an English force, but was in turn defeated and his State of Indore occupied.

The Marathas were defeated because of the lack of unity amongst them and their foolishness in abandoning guerilla tactics for warfare on European lines. They were, however, not crushed but merely temporarily subdued.

Wellesley had achieved his purpose, one not unimportant to Indian history, for in six years a trading company occupying a small territory around Calcutta, the island of Bombay, and the town of Madras, had by 1804 transformed itself into a major power holding Bengal and southern India, its troops in occupation at Poona and Hyderabad, its political Residents at every native court. Only Rajputana, Sind, and the Punjab remained outside the net.

Wellesley's success was his own undoing. The simple commercial minds of the Directors of the East India Company found this Empire-building too much for their ledgers. The British Government, dazzled with its successes in the struggle with France, refused to consider a victory in India or a naval engagement in the Eastern seas as important. All they could see was that affairs in India had 'proved a vexatious and painful interruption of tranquillity'. An understatement of classic proportions.

Wellesley's period of office was followed by the appointment of Cornwallis for a second term. Cornwallis died two months after his arrival and was temporarily succeeded by Sir George Barlow, whose instructions were that under no circumstances must he endanger that 'tranquillity' so dear to the Directors. Rajputana was ravaged by Daulat Rao and Holkar, who had received from the Governor-General a letter which was virtually an incitement to do what they pleased. During Barlow's term of office, a mutiny amongst sepoys of the Madras army took place at Vellore, about which we will have more to say in a subsequent chapter.

Lord Minto, who arrived as Governor-General in 1807, modified the non-interference policy of his predecessor and indulged in a number of 'little wars' in Bundelkhand and Travancore. At this time, the British began to look with some fear at the countries bordering the western frontiers of its territories—Afghanistan, Persia, and the Central Asian Khanates. But actually on the doorstep of British territory was the only powerful independent State left in India, the kingdom of the Punjab. Its ruler, Ranjit Singh, had converted the religious militancy of the Sikhs into a formidable military power, commanded to some extent by European officers. Ranjit Singh sought to annex certain small Sikh States between his frontier on the Sutlej, and the Jumna, but these appealed to the British for protection. War did not result and diplomacy won a treaty which was observed by both sides until Ranjit's death thirty years later.

At this period, quasi-diplomatic missions were sent to Persia and Afghanistan, to ensure an alliance in case of an attack upon India by Napoleon, who was intriguing with Persia to send an expedition, but his retreat from Moscow in 1812 removed fears of a land invasion by the French.

Outside India, the islands of Bourbon and Mauritius, which had been used

as bases by French privateers, were annexed in 1810. Java was occupied in the following year but given over to the Dutch in exchange for their colonies in India in 1815.

In 1813, Minto was replaced by Lord Hastings. In England, the Charter of the East India Company came up for renewal. The result was the abolition of the Company's trading monopoly, except that with China. Furthermore, the Charter was to run for only twenty years, when it would be subject to further consideration.

One of the first acts of Hastings was a war against Nepal. The Gurkhas of that country had been indulging in border raids and had even reached the Gangetic plain. The British at the outset regarded it 'as a mere affair with a troublesome Raja of the frontier' but it turned out, because of the terrain, trackless jungles, and malarial foothills, to be a serious campaign. The British suffered many reverses but in 1815 negotiations for a peace were opened. But the demand to have a British Resident at Khatmandu was unacceptable, and fighting was resumed. In 1816, peace was made, some territory including the hill-station of Simla was handed over to the British, and a Resident accepted.

In Central India, organized banditry was ravaging the land. This was the work of the Pindaris, irregular troops who had been dispensed with by the native States after the signing of subsidiary alliances. Hastings, ignoring the veto of the Directors, decided to move against them, and assembled two armies amounting together to some 120,000 men.

The Marathas, seeing these immense military forces poised near their territories, could not believe they were there simply to destroy the menace of the Pindaris. They were right. Daulat Rao was not in a position to move but the Peshwa attacked the British Residency in Poona and the Resident withdrew to Kirkee where the Peshwa's forces were defeated (1817). After another defeat near Poona the Peshwa, after being hunted from place to place, was captured and sent to Bithur with a pension of £80,000.

The Raja of Nagpur attacked the British Residency there but was later defeated, as was Holkar near Ujjain. The campaign resulted in the annexation of the Deccan to the Bombay Presidency; most of Nagpur was occupied and a new raja placed on the throne. Holkar was allowed to return to Indore.

The Maratha War was now finally at an end, and the Pindaris exterminated. Peace descended on the wasted areas of Central India.

In 1823, Hastings was succeeded by Lord Amherst, but between the former's departure and the arrival of the new Governor-General, John Adam, a Company's servant, was in acting charge. His six months of rule are important only for a reversal of the tolerance towards the Press which had been ensured by Hastings's liberal opinions. Adam returned to the Press

regulations current under Wellesley and Minto, whose attitude was described by Kaye. During their periods of office

'this dread of the free diffusion of knowledge became a chronic disease . . . continually afflicting the members of Government with all sorts of hypochondriacal day-fears and night-mares, in which visions of the Printing Press and the Bible were ever making their flesh to creep, and their hair to stand erect with horror. It was our policy in those days to keep the natives of India in the profoundest possible state of barbarism and darkness, and every attempt to diffuse the light of knowledge among the people, either of our own or the independent States, was vehemently opposed and resented.'

Amherst's administration is chiefly memorable for two military actions and a mutiny.

In 1824, war was declared against Burma, which had threatened to occupy part of Bengal on the frontier of Arakan. A Burmese general, Maha Bandula, defeated a British force in the Arakan, but sea-power once again decided the campaign in favour of the British. Rangoon was occupied (1825) and peace was finally made by the Treaty of Yandabo in 1826. The Arakan and Tenasserim were annexed, a Resident was to be appointed to the Burmese capital of Ava, and an indemnity was paid. The British also retained control of Rangoon.

A mutiny took place at Barrackpore, when the Forty-Seventh Bengal Native Infantry refused to move for transit to Burma. It was suppressed with unnecessary bloodshed. The causes and significance of this event will be discussed with the earlier mutiny at Vellore and the later and more terrible one of 1857, in Chapter 3.

The other military action resulted from a dispute over the succession to the State of Bharatpur. The Raja having died in 1825, his successor, a child of six, was taken prisoner by a claimant who poisoned the regent and would, no doubt, have done the same for the boy Raja if the Commissioner of Delhi had not intervened. The great fortress of Bharatpur, allegedly impregnable, was stormed by a force under Lord Combermere, who lined his pockets with prize-money.

In 1828 Amherst resigned.

II

LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK 1828-35

Bentinck, who now assumed office as Governor-General, had been Governor of Madras at the time of the mutiny of sepoy at Vellore in 1806, and his

period of rule is particularly noteworthy for the administrative and social reforms carried out under his inspiration. These reforms will be dealt with in detail in the next chapter.

Politically, his administration completed the outline of the modern relationship between the princes and the paramount power which lasted until 1947. In Mysore, a peasants' revolt against maladministration was suppressed by the Company's forces in 1831 and the country taken over but not annexed. The Political Commissioner at Delhi was murdered and the criminal responsible, a chieftain, hanged. Coorg was also annexed 'in consideration of the unanimous will of the people'. A treaty of 'perpetual amity' (it lasted seventeen years) was concluded with Ranjit Singh.

This period, too, saw the foundation of that fear of Russia which was to dominate the century. Russia was also expanding its frontiers in Central Asia and the Indian Government sought to surround itself with buffer States. What Kaye, the historian of the First Afghan War, was to call 'the Great Game' had begun. Agents, sometimes openly, sometimes in disguise, were collecting military and topographical information. Ladakh, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Balkh, and Bokhara were explored. The Indus was surveyed in 1831, found to be navigable, and the Amirs of Sind told to permit commerce upon it. Naturally the Amirs viewed the surveyors, not too well disguised as a mission conveying a present of horses to Ranjit Singh, as the van of an English conquest. They were right—but were left some years to live with their fear.

III

THE AFGHAN, SIKH, AND BURMESE WARS 1836-56

Lord William Bentinck's administration as Governor-General was followed for a short period by that of Sir Charles Metcalfe, one of the most distinguished men of the Company's civil service. But the rule of not employing a servant of the Company in the highest office in India was rigidly adhered to, and Lord Auckland was appointed in 1836.

At the time, the home government was going through one of its Russo-phobe periods; and fear of Russian designs on India was the *leitmotiv* of Auckland's bumbling rule. He was, admittedly, saddled with instructions by Lord Palmerston, the Prime Minister, which encouraged him to believe a Russian attack on India was feasible—which it was not—and gave him the authority to indulge in that most irresponsible and politically disastrous escapade, the First Afghan War. Palmerston's instructions were explicit; Auckland was to

'judge what steps it may be proper and desirable to take to watch more closely than has hitherto been attempted the progress of Russian influence in a quarter which from its proximity to our Indian possessions, could not fail, if it were once established, to act injuriously on the system of our alliances, and possibly to interfere with the tranquillity of our own territory'.

The fear of Russia that saturated the atmosphere of Simla in the twenties and thirties of the last century dominated the private world of the policy-makers of the time. It is the theme of all the apparently insane actions of that nightmare period. It replaced sound judgment with precipitate folly and infected the most intelligent of men with the peculiar madness of those who find themselves surrounded with phantoms.

The historical figures who played the 'Great Game' ignored facts and relied on instinct. Their politics seem to us cynical and vacillating, but cynicism requires at least something concrete to be cynical about. Their actions were concealed with pompous sincerity. Documents were suppressed without even the consciousness of guilt. Honest men bewildered by affairs and tormented by rumour—that is the charitable explanation. The tragedy lies in the fact that it is probably the truth.

When examining these events, it is sometimes hard to believe that at the time they took place the frontiers of British India faced the Sutlej, and that the Empire of Ranjit Singh and all of Sind lay between it and the frontier hills and passes. A few topographical details supply the background of events.

Ludhiana, the centre of one school of ideas about frontier problems, is almost five hundred miles from Peshawar, and Kabul a hundred and ninety-one miles farther on. The Central Asia Khanates were even more remote. By the most conceivable route via Balkh, it is well over a thousand miles to Bokhara. Of equal importance are the distances involved from Orenburg, the most advanced Russian base of the period. To Bokhara, eleven hundred miles, to Khiva eight hundred.

In the framework of these distances Russia and England met in Central Asia. Not with armies but with intrigue. Not with coherent policies but with speculative adventures that created situations in which the Indian government had neither the civil nor the military resources to indulge, nor the Russians the means to sustain.

Let us examine against this geographical landscape the growth of the conviction that Russian expansion in Asia was a dangerous thing and that something must be done to stop it.

The rulers of eighteenth-century India were not much concerned with the

countries that formed its borders. It is not until the administration of Wellesley that the government in India embarked upon a foreign policy of its own.

Between 1798 and 1809, the activities of French agents in Persia and the subsequent belief in the possibility of an invasion of India from the Persian Gulf or the Caspian Sea crystallized fears into action. Wellesley employed an agent in Bushire to foment civil war in Afghanistan which indirectly resulted in a treaty with Persia designed primarily to keep French agents out of that country. Persia was to become the first line of defence against an invasion of India.

The Russo-Persian War in 1826-8 and the inability of England to support Persia meant that the first line had fallen almost overnight, and the menace of Russia replaced that of Napoleonic France.

In 1829, General Paskiewitch, then commanding Russian armies in the Caucasus, speaking openly of the coming war with England, prompted Lord Ellenborough—then President of the India Board—to outline the possible course of such a war.

He believed that Russian forces could march on Kabul and, using Afghanistan as a base, advance into India; but he did not anticipate such action in the near future. Basing his conclusions on the history of the English themselves, he assumed that the armies would be preceded by traders and when this took place the government would know that action was at hand.

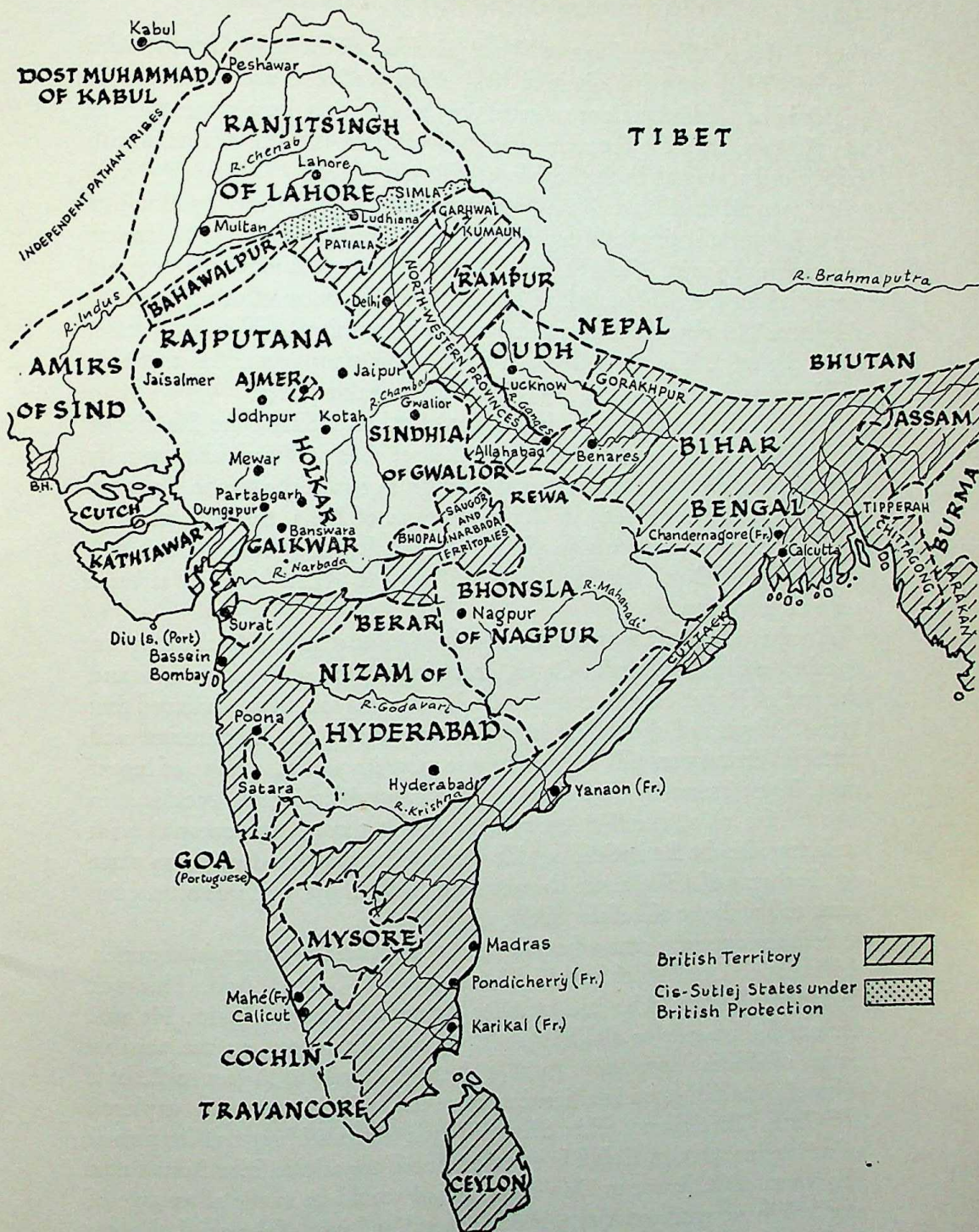
Civilian opinion in India at the time believed, with Sir Charles Metcalfe, that any invasion should be waited for on the line of the Sutlej, and policy should be one of consolidation within that frontier.

This opinion was, however, by no means predominant, and the Russophobes at Simla were responsible for adding immensely to the geographical knowledge of the time, almost, it might seem, by accident. They were, however, unable or unwilling to draw conclusions from it.

Central Asia at this period was explored and mapped, political intelligence collected, but the men themselves who travelled, and who were on easy terms with rulers who had reached the top through blood and intrigue, had virtually no influence upon the policy of the Indian government, for they themselves were incapable of analysing the complex phenomena of Asian politics which they could observe only in detail and not as part of any complete design.

Men nearer home were sceptical about Russia's ability to move armies through Afghanistan to India and were upheld in their views by the disastrous failure of General Peroffski's attempt to reach Khiva from Orenburg in 1839. But these rational beliefs had little or no effect in India.

Policy became centred on Afghanistan itself, and in this the outstanding



INDIA IN 1835

figure is that of Claude Martine Wade, Resident at Ludhiana on the Sikh frontier. Wade and his disciples held sharply defined views on frontier problems and their opinions reflected the fact that they were more afraid of the Afghans than the Russians, and believed that the real line of British India's defence rested in the kingdom of Ranjit Singh.

This would have been all very well if the Punjab had been anything like stable instead of being held together solely by the personality of an ageing and unhealthy man. If this Sikh kingdom was to collapse on the death of Ranjit Singh it would be British India that would be attacked and not the Afghans. The obvious answer then was a strong united Afghanistan under a friendly ruler. The tragic figure of Shah Shuja now appears on the stage of history as the expendable pawn in an unworkable policy.

Shah Shuja, the incapable descendant of Ahmed Khan, the founder of the Afghan monarchy, had been in exile since 1809 and had failed to rally any significant support in his several attempts to regain the throne. In 1833 an attempt had been aided by the government of India, the only result of which had been the annexation of the Vale of Peshawar by Ranjit Singh and the driving of Dost Muhammad, the real ruler of Kabul, into an alliance with the Russians.

Another school of thought, more closely allied to that held by the theorists attached to the Residency at Cutch, accepting the loss of Persia as final and the end of Ranjit Singh's realm as an imminent probability, believed that Dost Muhammad should be helped to supremacy in Afghanistan and sustained there by subsidy and, what was more important, a hope of bigger ones. These eminently feasible ideas were rejected by Lord Auckland in favour of a plan, excellent enough in private theory, but completely at variance with the facts of the outside world. This was the decision to place on the throne of Afghanistan the wretched Shah Shuja, by force of English arms and with the aid of the Sikhs.

In the meantime, a man whose forward policy had few aspects in common with that of Lord Auckland had been active in Central Asia. This was Alexander Burnes, who had travelled extensively in those parts. He was famous for his ride to Bokhara in 1832, and his reports on the possible routes of Russian aggression. In 1836, he was appointed Agent in Kabul, where he established an intelligence service and, with his assistants, explored the Oxus. The advance of the Shah of Persia towards Herat and the arrival of a Russian agent in Kabul in 1837 produced the advice from Burnes that the return of Peshawar to Dost Muhammad would be to the advantage of the Indian government. But this was rejected and one of the chief, though lately converted, theorists of Simla, William Macnaghten, became the instrument of the disastrous policy of the First Afghan War. He assumed,

with Burnes, that the danger was Russia, and with this view filling his eyes he was unable to see the real effects of his policy in Afghanistan. The whole of the fear of Russia should have collapsed with Peroffski's failure to reach Khiva, an attempt not repeated until 1873, but it did not. Macnaghten continued in vague speculations in the north, while Kabul revolted against Shah Shuja and the British, engulfing both Burnes and himself.

The final comment on this extravagant confusion in frontier policy, rode into sight of the garrison of Jalalabad on 13 January 1842. It was Dr Brydon, the survivor of 16,500 British and Indian troops who had left Kabul exactly a week before and most of whom had been taken prisoner or killed by the Afghans. The illusions of Lord Auckland and fear of Russia had drawn blood and sown the seeds of the Sikh wars while Russia herself *retreated* to Orenburg.

These pointless wars led to the disruption of Indian finances and the pillage of draught animals from pulling the plough to dragging the commissariat wagon. To the dangerous fantasies of the British, Ellenborough, who succeeded Auckland in 1842, added farce by bringing back from Ghazni what he believed to be the gates of the temple of Somnath stolen by Sultan Mahmud in the tenth century.

'Our victorious army bears the gates of the temple of Somnath in triumph from Afghanistan, and the despoiled tomb of Sultan Mahomed looks upon the ruins of Ghuznee.

'The insult of eight hundred years is at last avenged. The gates of the temple of Somnath, so long the memorial of your humiliation, are become the proudest record of your national glory, the proof of your superiority in arms over the nations beyond the Indus.

'To you, Princes and Chiefs of Sirhind, of Rajwarra, of Malwa, and of Guzerat, I shall commit this glorious trophy of successful war.

'You will yourselves, with all honour, transmit the gates of sandalwood through your respective territories to the restored temple of Somnath.

'The chiefs of Sirhind shall be informed at what time our victorious army will first deliver the gates of the temple into their guardianship, at the foot of the bridge of the Sutlej.'

The farce lies not only in the supreme pomposity of the proclamation but in the fact that the gates were not from Somnath at all.

A revolution took place in Gwalior State in 1843, and fearing a conjunction between the still smouldering Marathas and the Sikhs, the State was occupied but not annexed.

Ellenborough's arrogance and his consistent contempt for the Directors led to the revocation of his appointment in 1844 and he was replaced by Sir Henry Hardinge.

Hardinge's period is important for the first war with the Sikhs. In 1839, Ranjit Singh died. Anarchy struck the Punjab. The following six years have the improbable quality of an Oriental romance—an Arabian Nights of blood and intrigue. There was a Queen-mother and a boy King, an effeminate Vizier and a turbulent, arrogant army, trained by French and Italian Generals.

The army was ruled by committees something like those in Cromwell's forces, playing king-maker with fingers on the trigger. Many of its leaders were intriguing with the British. The Rani, endeavouring to protect her son, pushed the army towards a foreign war to relieve its pressure upon her. On 11 December 1845, the Sikh army surged across the river Sutlej. But sobered by their own temerity they waited, 'an army listening in silence to the beating of its own heart'.

The campaign of the First Sikh War does no credit to British arms. Officered by a Peninsular general of monumental stupidity and incredible bravery, the war was almost lost by a pathological belief in the virtue of the bayonet and a fantastic disregard for the efficacy of artillery.

Sir Henry Hardinge, who had been one of Wellington's officers in the Napoleonic Wars, cried from the heart after the defeat of the Sikhs at Ferozepur, 'Another such victory and we are undone!'

Finally the Sikh army was defeated and a regency appointed in Lahore with Henry Lawrence 'in peaceful viceregal authority over the province'.

Kashmir was annexed and sold to Gulab Singh. This sale of a Muslim people to a Hindu dynasty has had its effect in our own times in the 'Kashmir problem'.

The Sikhs were not crushed, however, but only humiliated in battle and ignored, or overridden, by the British administration of their country.

War broke out again in 1848 when the Governor of Multan—seeing attack as the best form of defence—rebelled after the murder of two British officers, for which he was not responsible, but for which he expected to be blamed. Hardinge had now been succeeded by Lord Dalhousie, and in January 1849 a terrible battle was fought at Chilianwala where the British were nearly defeated; but at Gujarat (in February) a Sikh army was almost totally destroyed. The Punjab was now annexed and administered with such intelligence and energy that eight years later, on the outbreak of the Sepoy Revolt, the Sikhs instead of attacking the British remained quiet.

The major campaign outside India was the Second Burmese War in 1852. Frontier incidents and interference with merchants in Rangoon led

to the sending of a small naval force to the port, and its commander was instructed to negotiate with the Burmese Governor; but in reply to the Governor's incivility in keeping a party of naval officers waiting in the sun, he seized a Burmese vessel and, later, one of his ships was fired upon. War followed and the province of Pegu, or Lower Burma, was annexed and the Burmese deprived of outlets to the sea. During this war, a native regiment declined to go to Burma by sea for fear of losing caste but, unlike the mutiny at Barrackpore in 1824, no foolish action was taken against them.

Dalhousie's relations with Indian States have been the subject of much vituperation. He practised the 'doctrine of lapse'—the annexation of States on the ruler's death without leaving natural heirs—despite the right of adoption practised by Indian rulers. The first to go was the State of Satara, ruled by a family descended from Sivaji and held in particular reverence by Hindus. Two other Maratha States, Jhansi and Nagpur, were also annexed. This led naturally to unease among native rulers who saw no security for their continued independent rule. Dalhousie also refused to continue the pension normally granted to the deposed Peshwa, Baji Rao, and to his son Nana Sahib, and would probably have abolished the kingdom of Delhi if he had been permitted to do so by his Directors.

The kingdom of Oudh, which had been in a fantastic state of anarchy, misgovernment, and corruption, was also annexed in 1856.

IV

THE SEPOY REVOLT AND QUEEN VICTORIA'S PROCLAMATION
1857-8

The Sepoy Revolt or Indian Mutiny of 1857 is part of the mythology of the British and Indians as well as one of the most significant events in their history.

The causes and meaning of the revolt will be examined in Part V, Chapter 4. Here we will briefly outline the order of events.

It must be remembered that the Mutiny was confined to parts of northern India, the old cradles of power centred around the shadow of the once powerful all-India dominion of the Mughal Empire.

Open rebellion first broke out at Meerut on 10 May 1857. Within forty-eight hours, Delhi had fallen to the sepoys, and the old king, Bahadur Shah, had been proclaimed Emperor of India.

Lord Canning, who had succeeded Dalhousie in 1856, was not unnaturally obsessed by the thought that the Sikhs of the Punjab might rise

and pay off the old scores of the Sikh Wars and the annexation that followed them. The position in the Punjab was pregnant with danger.

At the moment of the fall of Delhi, there were some 58,000 trained native troops in the Punjab. European troops, numbering some 10,500, were broken up into two sections at the extreme ends of the province, one in the valley of Peshawar on the north-west frontier and the other in the Simla hills, with miserably weak outposts scattered at intervals between. Of the native troops some 36,000 belonged to the Bengal army—each a potential mutineer. The remainder were irregular troops and military police raised in the Punjab. On them depended the safety of the province. Would they make common cause with the Bengal sepoys? What was to be done? Here the 'Punjab system' paid off. Security, prosperity, some sort of justice, protection from tyranny, vigorous and beneficent rule—because of these the people waited.

This gave the British the opportunity to besiege Delhi and the city was retaken by assault on 14 September 1857.

'In the name of outraged humanity, in memory of innocent blood ruthlessly shed and in acknowledgement of the first signal vengeance inflicted on the foulest treason, the Governor-General-in-Council records his gratitude to Major-General Wilson and the brave army of Delhi.'

So wrote Lord Canning, underlining ironically that 'innocent blood' was still to be shed, for the city of Delhi was put to the sword, looted, and sacked. 'All the city people found within the walls when our troops entered were bayoneted on the spot; and the number was considerable, as you may suppose when I tell you that in some houses forty or fifty persons were hiding.' The mutineers had purposely left vast quantities of liquor and maddened by drink British troops went berserk. 'The troops,' wrote Sanders, the Commissioner of Delhi, 'were completely disorganized and demoralized by the immense amount of plunder that fell into their hands and the quantity of liquor which they managed to discover. . . .'

The whole population was driven out of the city, Prize Agents were digging for buried treasure, drum-head courts martial tapped their horrors in summary hangings. Delhi had been retaken—with a vengeance.

In the meanwhile, in Lucknow, the capital of Oudh, the Resident was besieged and the celebrated affair of the well at Cawnpore (Kanpur)—when English women and children were murdered by the Nana Sahib—had taken place. The Residency was finally relieved, after one attempt had failed, on 17 November 1857.

In Central India, the Rani of Jhansi had rebelled, but after the capture

of her fort in April 1858 she was hunted through the country. Her general, Tantia Topi, continued a guerilla war against British forces until 1859.

The effects of the Mutiny were far-reaching and deep, but here we are only concerned with the political consequences. The Crown finally assumed direct control of the government of India, and a new attitude was adopted towards the Indian States. The assumption of power by the Crown was almost a formality, for the East India Company's position had been that of 'mortgagees in possession' and the actual power was shared between the Board of Control, set up under Pitt's India Act of 1784, and the Governor-General who was a political nominee. An Act 'for the Better Government of India' was reinforced by a suitably high-sounding proclamation by Queen Victoria, which contained imperial disclaimers ('we desire no extension of our territorial possessions'), a certain condescension to the heathen ('firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity . . . we disclaim alike the right and desire to impose our convictions'), and the proposition that with the aid of a beneficent God a new and happy era was to come.

'When, by the blessing of Providence, internal tranquillity shall be restored, it is our earnest desire to stimulate the peaceful industry of India, to promote works of public utility and improvement, and to administer the government for the benefit of all our subjects resident therein. In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward. And may the God of all power grant to us, and to those in authority under us, strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people.'

THE COURSE OF THE MUTINY 1857-9

1857

- January Rumour of 'greased cartridges' started in Dum Dum.
- February 25 Mutiny of the Nineteenth Native Infantry at Berhampore.
- March 30 Disbandment of the Nineteenth N.I. in Barrackpore.
- April Unrest and incendiarism in Ambala.
- May 3 Mutiny in Lucknow prevented by Sir Henry Lawrence.
Disbandment of Seventh Irregular Cavalry.
- May 6 Disbandment of Thirty-fourth N.I. in Barrackpore.
- May 10 *Mutiny and Massacre at Meerut.*
- May Meerut Mutiny followed by outbreaks in Delhi, Ferozepur, Bombay, Aligarh, Mainpuri, Etawah, Bulandshar, Nasirabad, Bareilly, Moradabad, Shahjahanpur, and many smaller stations. Disarming of sepoys in Lahore, Agra, Lucknow, Peshawar, and Mardan. Delhi Field Force advanced to Kurnaul.
Death of General Anson, British Commander-in-Chief
- June Mutinies at Sitapur, Hansi, Hissar, Azimgarh, Gorakhpur, and Neemuch. Surviving Europeans besieged in Neemuch fort.
Mutinies at Gwalior, Bhurtpur, and Jhansi.
Mutiny at Cawnpore, then siege of European survivors (4-25 June) and massacre.
Mutiny in Benares forestalled; sepoys and doubtful Sikh battalion dispersed by gunfire.
Mutinies at Jewanpur, Allahabad, Jullundur, Phillaur, Nowgong, Rhoni, Fatehgurh, Aurungabad (Deccan), Fatehpur, and Jubbulpur. Aurangabad mutiny suppressed after a few days; rebels fled. Forcible disarming of Indian units at Nagpur and Barrackpore.
Mutinies at Faizabad, Sultanpur, and Lucknow. Order was restored in the latter, but the city and surrounding neighbourhood remained disturbed. Europeans sheltered in the Residency.
British defeated at Chinhhat (30 June), near Lucknow.
Siege of Lucknow began.
Also in June:
Battle of Badli-ke-Serai (8 June). Delhi Field Force took up position on the Ridge and began operations against Delhi.
Throughout June, the revolt spread through the Ganges plain, the Rajputana, Central India, and affected parts of Bengal.

The Course of the Mutiny 1857-9

251

- July Mutinies at Indore and Mhow, Auggur, Jhelum, Saugor, Sialkot, Dinapur, and Agra. Europeans concentrated in fort of Agra. Siege of Lucknow Residency continued throughout July; as did Delhi Field Force operations against the city of Delhi. General Barnard, commanding at Delhi, died of disease (5 July). General Havelock's force, advancing from Allahabad to the relief of Cawnpore, arrived on 17 July, one day too late to save the women and children from massacre. Indian units in Rawalpindi disarmed. Sialkot mutineers defeated by General John Nicholson at Trimmu Ghat (16 July).
- August Siege and relief of Arrah. Mutinies at Kolhapur (Bombay Presidency), Poonamali (near Madras), Jubbulpur, Bhopawar (near Indore), Mian Mir (near Lahore). During August, rebellion spread through Saugor and Narbada districts. Also in August: Surprise disarmament of Indian units in Berhampore (1 August). Continuation of siege of Residency at Lucknow; Havelock's first attempt to relieve it failed.
- September Outbreak forestalled in Karachi (14 September). Further outbreaks in Saugor and Narbada districts. Beginning of siege of Saugor. *Delhi assaulted and recaptured* (14-20 September). *Lucknow relieved by Havelock and Outram* (25 September); new siege of the reinforced garrison began.
- October Mutiny at Bhogalpur (near Dinapur). Unrest in Bihar, North Bengal and Assam. Mutiny in Bombay city forestalled (15 October). Revolt in Kotah state (15 October); Major Burton, the political agent, murdered.
- November *Lucknow relieved by Sir Colin Campbell* (17 November); garrison evacuated, and Residency and city temporarily abandoned. General Windham defeated outside Cawnpore (28 November); line of retreat from Lucknow threatened by mutineers.
- December *Decisive battle of Cawnpore* (6 December); armies of the Rao Sahib—nephew of the Nana Sahib—and of Tantia Topi routed by Sir Colin Campbell. Campaign in Ganges Doab. Capture of Fatehghurh.

252

The Expansion and Consolidation of British Dominion

1858

January

Beginning of Sir Hugh Rose's Central India campaign.
Sir Colin Campbell began campaign to recapture Lucknow.
Gurkha army of Nepal came to assistance of British in Lucknow campaign.

February

Saugor relieved by Sir Hugh Rose (2 February).
Assembly of Sir Colin Campbell's 'Army of Oudh' along Cawnpore-Lucknow road to await arrival of Gurkha army under Jang Bahadur.

March

Lucknow recaptured (21 March) and rebel armies dispersed into Oudh.
Continuation of Sir Hugh Rose's campaign.

April 1

Battle of the Betwa; Tantia Topi defeated.

April 3

Jhansi stormed.

April 4

Rani of Jhansi fled.

April 6

Final capture of Jhansi.
Azimgarh recaptured and garrison relieved.

April 15

Jewanpur reoccupied.

April 25

Sir Hugh Rose resumed advance on Kalpi.
Also in April:
Sir Colin Campbell began reconquest of Rohilkhand.
Fresh rising in Bihar, led by Koer Singh; after campaign against him, Koer Singh retreated wounded to his stronghold of Jagdespur, where he died of his wounds.

May 1

Second relief of Arrah.

May 5

Battle of Bareilly.

May 7

Bareilly recaptured.
Battle of Kunch; defeat of Tantia Topi.

May 10

Jagdespur recaptured.

May 23

Kalpi reoccupied by British.

May 24

Battle of Mohumdi. End of resistance in Rohilkhand.

May 27

Rebels began guerilla warfare in jungle.
Tantia Topi and Rani of Jhansi at gates of Gwalior.

June 1

Gwalior army deserted to rebels.
Tantia Topi and Rani of Jhansi seize Gwalior by surprise.

June 6

Sir Hugh Rose marched from Kalpi.

The Course of the Mutiny 1857-9

253

- June 16 Arrival of Sir Hugh Rose at Gwalior.
- June 17 Battle of Kotah-ki-Serai; this date is also supposed to be that of the death of the Rani of Jhansi.
- June 19 *Battle of Gwalior.*
- June 20 *Capture of the fortress; flight of Tantia Topi.*
 Also in June:
 Continuation of suppression of scattered guerilla forces in Oudh, Bihar, and along Nepalese frontier.
- July/December Guerilla bands gradually suppressed everywhere except in the Rajputana and Central India, where Tantia Topi remained free and continued active resistance.
 The battle of Rapti (31 December) ended resistance in northern India.
- 1859
- April 7 Tantia Topi betrayed by Man Singh, and captured.
- April 15 Trial of Tantia Topi.
- April 18 Execution of Tantia Topi.

Social Reform and the Beginnings of English Education

DURING THE PERIOD 1798-1857, the administration went through many periods of reform: the organization of bureaucratic rule, the rationalizing of the fiscal system, and the strengthening of the central authority. These led to conflict between conservative elements wishing to maintain with a loose Western-type administration the traditional patterns of society, and the liberal reformers who wished to impose British standards both of political organization and morality upon India. The story of this conflict is an interesting one but relevant to the history of India only through its results, which were the final, but slow, establishment of an alien system of government deriving its principles, though not its practice, from English political ideas. These administrative changes were paralleled by extensive social reforms and it is these latter which had an immediate effect on the nature of Indian society.

These reforms emerged from the same background as those more strictly political, for they both represented a belief in the superiority of British political and moral ideas. The background was the incidence of social reform in England, the abolition of slavery, the changes in the English penal code, the Poor Laws and so on, which all had the incentive of a militant Christian purpose. This same purpose, brought to India, saw only the outer darkness of Heathendom and, in it, Englishmen conniving at practices of the most satanic evil. The British government in India patronized Hindu and Muslim festivals, sending an officer to attend in its name, and engaged in various other 'heathen' ceremonials.

The reasons for this are simple. The Company's role was that of an *Indian* power. The early administration of the British was concerned with its own security and, seeing itself as the legatee of the Indian powers it had replaced, attempted no interference in the fabric of Indian life. But with the expansion of its rule, it was necessary to increase the number of administrators, and those that came brought with them a reformist zeal.

In 1829, the government moved against the Thugs (more accurately *phansidars*) who, working in gangs bound together by strict religious vows to the goddess Kali, waylaid travellers and strangled them. Their activities

were spread over the whole of northern India and were tolerated and supported by many landowners and petty rulers. The government also attempted to stamp out female infanticide and human sacrifice.

The question of suttee (*sati*), however, presented a more difficult problem. We have seen how immolation of a widow upon a funeral pyre was a custom of great tradition and significance amongst the Hindus. The Mughals had attempted to suppress the practice and isolated cases had been prevented by English officials. After some vacillation under previous Governors-General, Bentinck prohibited widow-burning in 1829. This prohibition, of course, only applied to British territories.

The most far-reaching innovation of Bentinck's administration was in the field of education—the first step in the anglicization of India, and a momentous one, for in it lay the seeds of political independence.

This, too, was to emerge from the civilizing mission the British now saw themselves engaged in. That it was a 'good design' can be seen in the cloud of rhetoric which Macaulay, who was to be to a large extent responsible for the establishment of English education in India, let loose in the English House of Commons in 1833.

'It may be that the public mind of India may expand under our system till it has outgrown that system; that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government; that, having become instructed in European knowledge, they may, in some future age, demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come I know not. But never will I attempt to avert or retard it. Whenever it comes, it will be the proudest day in English history. To have found a great people sunk in the lowest depths of slavery and superstition, to have so ruled them as to have made them desirous and capable of all the privileges of citizens, would indeed be a title to glory all our own. The sceptre may pass away from us. Unforeseen accidents may derange our most profound schemes of policy. Victory may be inconstant to our arms. But there are triumphs which are followed by no reverse. There is an empire exempt from all natural causes of decay. Those triumphs are the pacific triumphs of reason over barbarism; that empire is the imperishable empire of our arts and our morals, our literature and our laws.'

Macaulay envisaged a new type of conquest. The invaders of India before the British had slowly been absorbed into the Indian scene, but Macaulay saw English education as the means of assimilating India into the English tradition. This conception was so revolutionary that its true nature has often been overlooked especially as its motives were remarkably honest. Charles

Trevelyan, Macaulay's brother-in-law, stated the whole aim of this period of reform in a pamphlet on *Education in India*. It is worth quoting from this at some length as it contains that combination of altruism and self-interest which were now to characterize the attitude of the British in India until the end of their rule.

'The existing connexion between two such distant countries as England and India, cannot, in the nature of things, be permanent: no effort of policy can prevent the natives from ultimately regaining their independence. But there are two ways of arriving at this point. One of these is through the medium of revolution; the other, through that of reform. In one, the forward movement is sudden and violent; in the other, it is gradual and peaceable. One must end in the complete alienation of mind and separation of interests between ourselves and the natives; the other in a permanent alliance, founded on mutual benefit and good-will. The only means at our disposal for preventing the one and securing the other class of results is, to set the natives on a process of European improvement, to which they are already sufficiently inclined. They will then cease to desire and aim at independence on the old Indian footing. . . . The political education of a nation is a work of time; and while it is in progress, we shall be as safe as it will be possible for us to be. The natives will not rise against us, we shall stoop to raise them; there will be no reaction, because there will be no pressure; the national activity will be fully and harmlessly employed in acquiring and diffusing European knowledge, and in naturalizing European institutions. The educated classes, knowing that the elevation of their country on these principles can only be worked out under our protection, will naturally cling to us. . . . The change will thus be peaceably and gradually effected; there will be no struggle, no mutual exasperation; the natives will have independence, after first learning how to make good use of it; and we shall exchange profitable subjects for still more profitable allies. The present administrative connexion benefits families, but a strict commercial union between the first manufacturing and the first producing country in the world, would be a solid foundation of strength and prosperity to our whole nation. If this course be adopted, there will, properly speaking, be no separation. A precarious and temporary relation will almost imperceptibly pass into another far more durable and beneficial. Trained by us to happiness and independence, and endowed with our learning and political institutions, India will remain the proudest monument of British benevolence; and we shall long continue to reap, in the affectionate attachment of the people, and in a great commercial

intercourse with their splendid country, the fruit of that liberal and enlightened policy which suggested to us this line of conduct.'

Macaulay was one of the founders of modern India, for his very narrowness of purpose, his arrogant brushing aside of Indian civilization, his concentration on the fitting of an English legal system to India, brought about—if with rather different emphasis than he anticipated—that 'attachment' to British ideas that independent India shows today. English supplied the language of unity and the structure of freedom.

Dalhousie continued the work by organizing vernacular schools and in the year of the Mutiny, 1857, the universities of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay were founded.

*Opinions of Munro and Malcolm on the Functions of British Rule
in India, at the beginning of the era of reforms*

Sir Thomas Munro (1761–1827) and Sir John Malcolm (1769–1833) are representative of the 'Romantic' generation of British rulers in India. This generation was strongly against the movement of reform, which really began with Cornwallis and aimed to impose English ideas and institutions on Indian society. Munro, particularly, envisaged human society divided by natural law into rulers and ruled. Nevertheless, he believed that the old ruling classes should be conciliated and allowed expression by absorbing some of them into the British administration. In 1817, Munro sent the Governor-General, Lord Hastings, a series of long Minutes protesting against the, by then, well-established policy of no employment for Indians other than the meanest of clerical posts. The extract that follows is taken from Gleig's *Life of Sir Thomas Munro*, 1830.

This is an old objection [that Orientals are 'too corrupt to be trusted'], and one which is generally applicable, in similar circumstances, to the natives of every country. Nobody has ever supposed that the subordinate officers of the Excise and Customs in England are remarkable for their purity. But we need not go home for examples. The Company's servants were notoriously known to make their fortunes in partnership with native agents, until Lord Cornwallis thought it advisable to purchase their integrity by raising their allowances. Let this be done with regard to the natives, and the effect will be similar, though not perhaps in a similar degree; for we cannot expect to find in a nation fallen under a foreign dominion the same pride and high principle as among a free people; but I am persuaded that we shall meet with a greater share of integrity and talent than we are aware of. While we persist in withholding liberal salaries from the natives, we shall have the services of the worst part of them. . . .

Foreign conquerors have treated the natives with violence, and often with great

cruelty, but none has treated them with so much scorn as we; none have stigmatized the whole people as unworthy of trust, as incapable of honesty, and as fit to be employed only where we cannot do without them. It seems to be not only ungenerous, but impolitic, to debase the character of a people fallen under our dominion. . . .

The strength of the British Government enables it to put down every rebellion, to repel every foreign invasion, and to give to its subjects a degree of protection which those of no native power enjoy. Its laws and institutions also afford them a security from domestic oppression, unknown in those States; but these advantages are dearly bought. They are purchased by the sacrifice of independence, of national character, and of whatever renders a people respectable. The natives of the British provinces may, without fear, pursue their different occupations . . . and enjoy the fruits of their labour in tranquillity; but none of them can aspire to anything beyond this mere animal state of thriving in peace . . . none of them can look forward to any share in the legislation or civil or military government of their country. . . . The effect of this state of things is observable in all the British provinces, whose inhabitants are certainly the most abject race in India. No elevation of character can be expected among men, who, in the military line, cannot attain to any rank above that of subadar, where they are as much below an ensign as an ensign is below the commander-in-chief, and who, in the civil line, can hope for nothing beyond some petty judicial or revenue office, in which they may, by corrupt means, make up for their slender salary.

The consequence, therefore, of the conquest of India by the British arms would be, in place of raising, to debase the whole people. There is perhaps no example of any conquest in which that natives have been so completely excluded from all share of the government of their country as in British India.

Among all the disorders of the native States, the field is open for every man to raise himself; and hence among them there is a spirit of emulation, of restless enterprise and independence, far preferable to the servility of our Indian subjects. The existence of independent native States is also useful in drawing off the turbulent and disaffected among our native troops.

Their exclusion from offices of trust and emolument has become a part of our system of government, and has been productive of no good. Whenever, from this cause, the public business falls into arrear, it is said to be owing to the want of a sufficient number of Europeans; and more European agency is recommended as a cure for every evil. Such agency is too expensive; and, even if it was not, it ought to be abridged rather than enlarged, because it is, in many cases, much less efficient than that of the natives. For the discharge of all subordinate duties, but especially in the judicial line, the natives are infinitely better qualified than Europeans. I have never seen any European whom I thought competent, from his knowledge of the language and the people, to ascertain the value of the evidence given before him. The proceedings in our courts of judicature, which in our reports make a grave and respectable appearance, are, I know, frequently the subject of derision among the natives.

In all original suits they are much fitter to investigate the merits than Europeans. The European judges should be confined almost entirely to the business of appeals. In criminal cases the fact should be found by a native jury, who are much more competent than either the European judge or his officers to weigh the nature of the evidence.

Sir John Malcolm, a Conservative with a profound horror of anything remotely radical, also deprecated the exclusion of Indians from the government of their country:

I regret as deeply as you, or any man, can, that there is no opening for natives. The system of depression becomes more alarming as our power extends . . . we must, or we cannot last, contrive to associate the natives with us in the task of rule, and in the benefits and gratifications which accrue from it.

Kaye: *Life of Malcolm*, Vol. II, pp. 392-3.

Both Munro and Malcolm were strongly against interference in the life of the people, beyond the support of native institutions and the security of public order.

The ruling vice of our government is innovation . . . it is time that we should learn that neither the face of the country, its property, nor its society, are things that can be suddenly improved by any contrivance of ours, though they may be greatly injured by what we mean for their good; that we should take every country as we find it, and not rashly attempt to regulate its landed property either in accumulation or division.

Munro's Minute 'On the state of the country', 31 December 1824
(Gleig: *Munro*, Vol. III, p. 381).

It is too much regulation that ruins everything. Englishmen are as great fanatics in politics as Mahomedans in religion. They suppose that no country can be saved without English institutions. The natives of this country have enough of their own to answer every useful object of internal administration, and if we maintain and protect them, the country will in a very few months settle itself.

Munro to Elphinstone, on the future administration of the conquered Maratha country,
12 May 1818 (*ibid.*, p. 252).

The most important of the lessons we can derive from past experience is to be slow and cautious in every procedure which has a tendency to collision with the habits and prejudices of our native subjects. We may be compelled by the character of our government to frame some institutions, different from those we found established, but we should adopt all we can of the latter into our system . . . our internal government . . . should be administered on a principle of humility not pride. We must divest our minds of all

arrogant pretensions arising from the presumed superiority of our knowledge, and seek the accomplishment of the great ends we have in view by the means which are best suited to the peculiar nature of the objects. . . . That time may gradually affect a change, there is no doubt; but the period is as yet distant when that can be expected; and come when it will, to be safe or beneficial, it must be . . . the work of society itself. All that government can do is, by maintaining the internal peace of the country, and by adapting its principles to the various feelings, habits and character of its inhabitants, to give time for the slow and silent operation of the desired improvement, with a constant impression that every attempt to accelerate this end will be attended with the danger of its defeat.

Malcolm: *Political History*, Vol. II, p. 183.

The whole belief in 'progress' and 'improvement', which was fundamental to the ideas of the Utilitarians, was to win out in India. Legislation, both Munro and Malcolm believed, was ineffectual. 'Great and beneficial alterations in society, to be complete', wrote Malcolm (*Memoir of Central India*, Vol. II, p. 281), 'must be produced within the society itself; they cannot be the mere fabrication of its superiors, or of a few who deem themselves enlightened.' Munro was even more dogmatic:

I have no faith in the modern doctrine of the rapid improvement of the Hindoos, or of any other people. The character of the Hindoos is probably much the same as when Vasco da Gama first visited India, and it is not likely that it will be much better a century hence.

When I read, as I sometimes do, of a measure by which a large province had been suddenly improved, or a race of semi-barbarians civilized almost to Quakerism, I throw away the book.

Munro to Canning, 30 June 1821
(Gleig: *Munro*, Vol. II, p. 57).

But both Munro and Malcolm were dead when the full tide of 'progress' surged over British India.

Extracts From Macaulay's Minute on Education 1835

The conquest of India by the English language is an achievement without equivalent in the history of the world. It is unwise to pour scorn on Macaulay for the misunderstandings that were implicit in the policy of anglicization of which he is representative. His apparent arrogance was compounded partly of an all-embracing ignorance of the nature of Indian culture and, as one English historian (Edward Thompson) put it, 'an almost unequalled knack of guessing, if not the whole truth, at any rate a large and essential part'. Furthermore, Indians themselves were demanding to be taught English and to be given a key to Western knowledge. The English language

unified the great diversity of Indian intellectuals and gave to them a common speech in which to fight for their freedom. The Minute itself is a superb display of the great torrent of Macaulay's prose and is well worth reading for its own sake, as well as being a major document in the history of India. On 7 March 1835, English became the official language of British India.

We have a fund to be employed as government shall direct for the intellectual improvement of the people of this country. The simple question is, what is the most useful way of employing it?

All parties seem to be agreed on one point, that the dialects commonly spoken among the natives of this part of India contain neither literary or scientific information, and are, moreover so poor and rude that, until they are enriched from some other quarter, it will not be easy to translate any valuable work into them. It seems to be admitted on all sides that the intellectual improvement of those classes of the people who have the means of pursuing higher studies can at present be effected only by means of some language not vernacular amongst them.

What, then, shall that language be? One half of the Committee maintain that it should be the English. The other half strongly recommend the Arabic and Sanskrit. The whole question seems to me to be, which language is the best worth knowing?

I have no knowledge of either Sanskrit or Arabic.—But I have done what I could to form a correct estimate of their value. I have read translations of the most celebrated Arabic and Sanskrit works. I have conversed both here and at home with men distinguished by their proficiency in the Eastern tongues. I am quite ready to take the Oriental learning at the valuation of the Orientalists themselves. I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. The intrinsic superiority of the Western literature is, indeed, fully admitted by those members of the Committee who support the Oriental plan of education.

It will hardly be disputed, I suppose, that the department of literature in which the Eastern writers stand highest is poetry. And I certainly never met with any Orientalist who ventured to maintain that the Arabic and Sanskrit poetry could be compared to that of the great European nations. But, when we pass from works of imagination to works in which facts are recorded and general principles investigated, the superiority of the Europeans becomes absolutely immeasurable. It is, I believe, no exaggeration to say, that all the historical information which has been collected from all the books written in the Sanskrit language is less valuable than what may be found in the most paltry abridgments used at preparatory schools in England. In every branch of physical or moral philosophy the relative position of the two nations is nearly the same.

How, then, stands the case? We have to educate a people who cannot at present be educated by means of their mother-tongue. We must teach them some foreign language.

The claims of our own language it is hardly necessary to recapitulate. It stands pre-eminent even among the languages of the West. It abounds with works of imagination not inferior to the noblest which Greece has bequeathed to us; with models of every species of eloquence; with historical compositions, which, considered merely as narratives, have seldom been surpassed, and which, considered as vehicles of ethical and political instruction, have never been equalled; with just and lively representations of human life and human nature; with the most profound speculations on metaphysics, morals, government, jurisprudence, and trade; with full and correct information respecting every experimental science which tends to preserve the health, to increase the comfort, or to expand the intellect of man. Whoever knows that language, has ready access to all the vast intellectual wealth, which all the wisest nations of the earth have created and hoarded in the course of ninety generations. It may safely be said that the literature now extant in that language is of far greater value than all the literature which three hundred years ago was extant in all the languages of the world together. Nor is this all. In India, English is the language spoken by the ruling class. It is spoken by the higher class of natives at the seats of government. It is likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seas of the East. It is the language of two great European communities which are rising, the one in the south of Africa, the other in Australasia; communities which are every year becoming more important, and more closely connected with our Indian Empire. Whether we look at the intrinsic value of our literature, or at the particular situation of this country, we shall see the strongest reason to think that, of all foreign tongues, the English tongue is that which would be the most useful to our native subjects.

The question now before us is simply whether, when it is in our power to teach this language, we shall teach languages in which, by universal confession, there are no books on any subject which deserve to be compared to our own; whether, when we can teach European science, we shall teach systems which, by universal confession, whenever they differ from those of Europe, differ for the worse; and whether, when we can patronize sound Philosophy and true History, we shall countenance, at the public expense, medical doctrines which would disgrace an English farrier—Astronomy, which would move laughter in girls at an English boarding-school—History, abounding with kings thirty feet high, and reigns thirty thousand years long—and Geography, made up of seas of treacle and seas of butter.

It is said that we ought to secure the co-operation of the native public, and that we can do this only by teaching Sanskrit and Arabic.

I can by no means admit that, when a nation of high intellectual attainments undertakes to superintend the education of a nation comparatively ignorant, the learners are absolutely to prescribe the course which is taken by the teachers. It is not necessary, however, to say anything on this subject. For it is proved by unanswerable evidence that we are not at present securing the co-operation of the natives. It would be bad enough to consult their intellectual taste at the expense of their intellectual health. But we are

consulting neither—we are withholding from them the learning for which they are craving; we are forcing on them the mock-learning which they nauseate.

This is proved by the fact that we are forced to pay our Arabic and Sanskrit students, while those who learn English are willing to pay us. All the declamation in the world about the love and reverence of the natives for their sacred dialects will never, in the mind of any impartial person, outweigh the undisputed fact, that we cannot find, in all our vast Empire, a single student who will let us teach him those dialects unless we will pay him.

It is said that the Sanskrit and Arabic are the languages in which the sacred books of a hundred millions of people are written, and that they are, on that account, entitled to peculiar encouragement. Assuredly it is the duty of the British government in India to be not only tolerant, but neutral on all religious questions. But to encourage the study of a literature admitted to be of small intrinsic value only because that literature inculcates the most serious errors on the most important subjects, is a course hardly reconcilable with reason, with morality, or even with that very neutrality which ought, as we all agree, to be sacredly preserved. It is confessed that a language is barren of useful knowledge. We are told to teach it because it is fruitful of monstrous superstitions. We are to teach false history, false astronomy, false medicine, because we find them in company with a false religion. We abstain, and I trust shall always abstain, from giving any public encouragement to those who are engaged in the work of converting natives to Christianity. And, while we act thus, can we reasonably and decently bribe men out of the revenues of the State to waste their youth in learning how they are to purify themselves after touching an ass, or what text of the Vedas they are to repeat to expiate the crime of killing a goat?

It is taken for granted by the advocates of Oriental learning that no native of this country can possibly attain more than a mere smattering of English. They do not attempt to prove this; but they perpetually insinuate it. They designate the education which their opponents recommend as a mere spelling-book education. They assume it as undeniable, that the question is between a profound knowledge of Hindoo and Arabian literature and science on the one side, and a superficial knowledge of the rudiments of English on the other. This is not merely an assumption, but an assumption contrary to all reason and experience. We know that foreigners of all nations do learn our language sufficiently to have access to all the most abstruse knowledge which it contains, sufficiently to relish even the more delicate graces of our most idiomatic writers. There are in this very town natives who are quite competent to discuss political or scientific questions with fluency and precision in the English language. I have heard the very question on which I am now writing discussed by native gentlemen with a liberality and an intelligence which would do credit to any member of the Committee of Public Instruction. Indeed, it is unusual to find, even in the literary circles of the Continent, any foreigner who can express himself in English with so much facility and correctness as we find in many Hindoos. Nobody, I suppose, will contend that English is so difficult to a Hindoo as

Greek to an Englishman. Yet an intelligent English youth, in a much smaller number of years than our unfortunate pupils pass at the Sanskrit college, becomes able to read, to enjoy, and even to imitate, not unhappily, the composition of the best Greek authors. Less than half the time which enables an English youth to read Herodotus and Sophocles ought to enable a Hindoo to read Hume and Milton.

To sum up what I have said: I think it clear that we are free to employ our funds as we choose; that we ought to employ them in teaching what is best worth knowing; that English is better worth knowing than Sanskrit or Arabic; that the natives are desirous to be taught English, and are not desirous to be taught Sanskrit or Arabic; that neither as the languages of law, nor as the languages of religion, have the Sanskrit and Arabic any peculiar claim to our encouragement; that it is possible to make natives of this country thoroughly good English scholars, and that to this end our efforts ought to be directed.

In one point I fully agree with the gentlemen to whose general views I am opposed. I feel, with them, that it is impossible for us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population.

I would strictly respect all existing interests. I would deal even generously with all individuals who have had fair reason to expect a pecuniary provision. But I would strike at the root of the bad system which has hitherto been fostered by us. I would at once stop the printing of Arabic and Sanskrit books; I would abolish the Madrasa and the Sanskrit college at Calcutta. Benares is the great seat of Brahmanical learning; Delhi, of Arabic learning. If we retain the Sanskrit college at Benares and the Mahomedan college at Delhi, we do enough, and much more than enough in my opinion, for the Eastern languages. If the Benares and Delhi colleges should be retained, I would at least recommend that no stipend shall be given to any students who may hereafter repair thither, but that the people shall be left to make their own choice between the rival systems of education without being bribed by us to learn what they have no desire to know. The funds which would thus be placed at our disposal would enable us to give larger encouragement to the Hindoo college at Calcutta, and to establish in the principal cities throughout the Presidencies of Fort William and Agra schools in which the English language might be well and thoroughly taught.

I believe that the present system tends, not to accelerate the progress of truth, but to delay the natural death of expiring errors. I conceive that we have at present no right to the respectable name of a Board of Public Instruction. We are a Board for wasting public money, for printing books which are less value than the paper on which they are printed was while it was blank; for giving artificial encouragement to absurd history,

absurd metaphysics, absurd physics, absurd theology; for raising up a breed of scholars who find their scholarship an encumbrance and a blemish, who live on the public while they are receiving their education, and whose education is so utterly useless to them that, when they have received it, they must either starve or live on the public all the rest of their lives. Entertaining these opinions, I am naturally desirous to decline all share in the responsibility of a body which, unless it alters its whole mode of proceeding, I must consider not merely as useless, but as positively noxious.

Indian Reaction to British Expansion

I

THE NEW INDIA: RAM MOHUN ROY

ONE OF THE RESULTS of the rule of Warren Hastings was a growing interest in the language, literature, and tradition of the Hindus. In 1785, Charles Wilkins published a translation of the *Bhagavad Gita*, and in 1790 Sir William Jones produced a translation of Kalidasa's epic drama, *Sakuntala*. The effect upon European writers was immense. Schlegel, Schopenhauer, and Goethe were deeply influenced by translations from Sanskrit. But this interest also had its effect in India for it showed to the Hindus the value of their own ancient writings and gave them a sense of national solidarity against the pretensions of Western science and culture, and turned them to a re-examination of their own beliefs.

Such an examination, and the impact of Western rationalism and liberal ideas, produced the reformist activity of Ram Mohun Roy (1772-1833). Ram Mohun was born into a Brahmin family, and studied Persian, Arabic, and Sanskrit, and later English. He entered the service of the Company, but later retired to devote his immense energies to the social and religious improvement of his countrymen. His first act was to announce his belief in the unity of God, and he tried to demonstrate that the Hindu gods and the worship of images were accretions to the true scriptures. His views, which had no impact on the ordinary people, resulted in bitter controversy and, in 1829, in the establishment of an organization which later became the Brahmo Samaj, and which will be dealt with in a later section.

Ram Mohun was a pioneer of English education and he petitioned the Governor-General in 1823 against the founding of a Sanskrit college in Calcutta. He also attacked the practices of suttee, the caste system, and the inequality of women, along with many other social abuses.

Ram Mohun was not content with memorializing and petitioning the authorities in Calcutta. He was fully aware that the seat of power was in London. He therefore made the journey to England and gave evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons then considering the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1833.

He was perhaps the first 'modern' Indian. The incentive of Ram Mohun's example was to produce the greatest awakening of Indian India in the second half of the nineteenth century. Though Ram Mohun's period of activity was from 1813 to 1830, the effect of his ideas was continuous throughout the next century. His aim was to produce a synthesis between the new liberal world of the West, and Hinduism. That this was possible he was convinced, for he maintained that the core of Hindu thought was both moral and rational and therefore could come together with the moral rationalism of the West. His main contribution was to show the way to the reconciliation of political aims that were Western in direction and inspiration with certain elements in the traditional Hindu pattern—to show, in fact, that it was possible to agitate for liberal democracy without ceasing to be an Indian. Such an apparently simple premise was to produce a nationalist movement based widely upon a continuing tradition yet forward-looking and progressive, its political demands readily comprehensible to the rulers.

II

TRADITIONAL INDIA: THE GROWTH OF FEAR

We have seen how the contempt of the new type of Englishman for the everyday of Indian life widened the gulf between the two races. The political and social reforms, always with their background of militant Christianity, furthered the lack of confidence between Indian rulers, Indian soldiers, and the British who were so confidently extending their dominion.

The mutiny at Vellore in 1806 was the result of instructions to the sepoys to wear a turban, trim their beards, and give up caste marks. With the example of forcible conversions to Islam by Tipu, this appeared to the Hindu sepoys as an attempt to make them Christians and the regiment refused to obey the orders. The ringleaders were ordered nine hundred lashes apiece and the sepoys rose and massacred two companies of European troops. The mutiny was suppressed.

In 1824, a sepoy regiment refused to move for action in Burma because it felt its caste endangered by a refusal to supply special transport for them to carry their cooking utensils, caste usage compelling each man to have his own set. The result was that, after a warning, guns opened fire on the parade-ground where the sepoys were assembled. A court martial sat immediately and Lady Amherst, wife of the Governor-General, recorded its decisions in her journal.

'The ringleaders [six] were hanged the next morning. Many hundreds since have been found guilty and sentenced to death, but this was commuted to hard labour for fourteen years on the public roads. Five other ringleaders were executed afterwards, and one man whom the mutineers regarded as their Commander-in-Chief was hung in chains in front of the lines. . . . All the officers [native] were dismissed the service and their guilt proclaimed at the head of every regiment in their native language.'

During the Second Burmese War (1852) another sepoy regiment, afraid of losing caste, refused to cross the sea to Burma. This time, however, the Governor-General, Dalhousie, sensibly remembered the affair of 1824 and took no action but to march them away to Dacca.

A number of other mutinies or near-mutinies had taken place, all with some basis of fear of caste-pollution, encouraged by over-zealous Christian officers arrogantly displaying their religion and insisting upon its superiority.

All the acts of an expanding power seemed to foreshadow attacks upon caste. The equality of all before the English law, whether Brahmin or Sudra, reinforced this opinion. In 1857 the new Enfield rifle was being introduced to the army. It was necessary before loading the rifle to bite a greased cartridge. The grease was believed to be cow or pig fat, the former a sacred animal to Hindus and the latter a pollution to Muslims. Here was the final attack, they believed, upon their religion.

By the end of Dalhousie's administration, the whole of India and in particular the north was uneasy. Nearly every class had been shaken in some way by the reforms and political changes instituted by the administration. The princes felt themselves threatened with the annexation of their territories under the 'doctrine of lapse', landowners were threatened with inquiry into their titles. The annexation of Jhansi, Nagpur, Satara, and other States has already been mentioned. The expropriation of land held under dubious tenure was carried out through the Inam Commission which confiscated nearly twenty thousand estates in the Deccan. This was all done without any attempt to rectify the many injustices that resulted or to consider traditional values or customs. These territorial changes produced a vast number of dissatisfied and angry men.

Apart from the direct interest of princes and landowners, the higher castes saw themselves threatened not only in the army but outside it. The new education disrupted the ancient authority of the priest. Western science seemed more powerful than the magic of the Brahmin. In the jails, castes were forced to eat together. The alien conquerors had abolished suttee; the Hindu Widows Remarriage Act of 1856, though it was mainly due to the

efforts of a Hindu, Ishvarchandra Vidyasagar, was seen, with the suppression of suttee, as another, dangerous interruption of the Hindu pattern of society.

All the factors, the fear of the sepoys over what they believed to be a threat to their caste, the princes and landowners facing expropriation of one sort or another, forced traditional India to make an attempt to re-establish itself and drive the conqueror into the sea.

III

THE MUTINY AS THE MEETING OF TWO DYING SYSTEMS

There is no doubt that agents of the ex-king of Oudh and of the Nana Sahib were active amongst sepoy regiments, and that discipline had deteriorated so much that the affair of the greased cartridges precipitated a revolt that would have found another immediate cause if the British had not supplied such a good one.

When the initial step had been taken, the result was an outbreak of ferocity on both sides. There is little purpose in recapitulating the horrors perpetrated by British and Indians; suffice it to say that a suitable parallel in Europe would be the Thirty Years War, without the excuses that the seventeenth century presumably supplies.

If one examines a list of the leaders of the 'mutineers', nearly every one of importance came from the ranks of the dispossessed. Because of this, Indians before and even after they won their freedom have referred to the Mutiny as a war of independence. It was, but not in a particularly acceptable sense. Far from being a national uprising, the Mutiny was the last throw, or so it seemed, of the privileged classes of the old feudalism. In fact, it was the meeting of two dying systems: British India as an aggressive 'country' power, and traditional India unable to absorb it. In the clash it was only, ironically enough, traditional India which survived, though as we shall see in a rather unexpected form. The old system of British government which had evolved from the first conquests of a commercial company, and which Dalhousie was rapidly dismantling, was given its death-blow by the Mutiny. Liberal imperialism, with its arrogant belief that efficiency of administration was the proof of good government, was to take its place.

British Temper towards India during and after the Mutiny

The Sepoy Revolt of 1857-9 is the watershed of British Indian history for, as we will see, its consequence was profound distrust between Indians and British.

Much has been written about the ferocity with which both sides fought each other. A great fear grew amongst the British, hysterically anxious for the safety of their wives and children, their lives and their investments. Just what shape this fear took can best be seen in a contemporary view, by Sir George Trevelyan. Writing just after the Mutiny, in a series of letters published under the title of *The Competition Wallah* (London, 1864), Trevelyan, a Liberal, and son of Sir Charles Trevelyan—a famous Indian administrator and educator—wrote clearly and fearlessly (quite a courageous act while anti-Indian feeling was still high) about various aspects of life in India. The following quotation is taken from Letter IX: 'British temper towards India before, during, and since the Mutiny'.

The events of those times have left their trace in our military vocabulary. During the year and a half which followed the outbreak at Meerut, to 'loot' and to 'polish off' became household verbs in the British army. It was only the other day that I was present while a party of military men were discussing the beauties of Benares. 'Gad,' exclaimed one of them, 'what a town it would be to loot. They say that nobody knows when it was looted last. There must be at least ten crore of jewels and coin somewhere about the place.' The notion seemed wonderfully palatable to the company, and afforded a pregnant subject of conversation. Meanwhile, I sat with my mouth wide open, marvelling how on earth English officers could entertain the idea of plundering a city which was exactly as much an English city as York or Exeter. Talk of this description is childish enough, but, when indulged in frequently, it becomes significant. The sterling qualities of our army alone rescued it from utter demoralization. No other soldiers in the world could have preserved their self-respect amidst so fearful an ordeal. Eighteen months in such a school would have turned the French line-regiments into Zouaves, the Zouaves into Turcos, and the Turcos into cannibals.

After all, however, the best hope of the miserable natives lay in the justice and moderation of official men. The stern and cold animosity of the civilians, the reckless and unscrupulous retribution dealt out by the military, were as nothing to the rabid ferocity of the non-official community. These men had come to the shores of India for the sole purpose of making money. They were under no professional obligation of providing for the prosperity and happiness of the population, and indeed were too apt to regard their dark fellow-subjects simply as tools for promoting their own ends. Now that their lives and fortunes were brought to the extreme of jeopardy, in consequence of a wide-spread and most formidable revolt of the despised race, their fury and hatred knew no measure. In one or two instances the government was constrained by the pressure of circumstances to place power in the hands of men of this class. In one great city some low Europeans were vested with full magisterial authority. The unhappy place was delivered over to a Reign of Terror. Whatever misery could be inflicted by cupidity, private malice, and vulgar barbarity, was endured to the full by the wretched natives at the hands of this triumvirate of snobs.

The tone of the Press was horrible. Never did the cry for blood swell so loud as among these Christians and Englishmen in the middle of the nineteenth century. The pages of those brutal and grotesque journals published by Hébert and Marat during the agony of the French Revolution, contained nothing that was not matched and surpassed in the files of some Calcutta papers. Because the pampered Bengal sepoys had behaved like double-dyed rascals, therefore every Hindoo and Mussulman was a rebel, a traitor, a murderer; therefore, we were to pray that all the population of India might have one neck, and that all the hemp in India might be twisted into one rope. It would be wearisome to quote specimens of the style of that day. Every column teemed with invectives which at the time seemed coarse and tedious, but which we must now pronounce to be wicked and blasphemous. For what could be more audacious than to assert that Providence had granted us a right to destroy a nation in our wrath?—to slay, and burn, and plunder, not in the cause of order and civilization, but in the name of our insatiable vengeance, and our imperial displeasure? The wise ruler, whose comprehensive and impartial judgment preserved him from the contagion of that fatal frenzy, was assailed with a storm of obloquy for which we should in vain seek a precedent in history. To read the newspapers of that day, you would believe that Lord Canning was at the bottom of the whole mutiny; that upon his head was the guilt of the horrors of Cawnpore and Allahabad; that it was he who had passed round the *chupattis* and the *lotahs*, and spread the report that the Russ was marching down from the north to drive the English into the sea. After all, the crime charged against him was, not that he had hindered the butchery, but that his heart was not in the work. No one had the face to say, or, at any rate, no one had the weakness to believe, that Lord Canning had pardoned any considerable number of condemned rebels. His crying sin was this, that he took little or no pleasure in the extermination of the people whom he had been commissioned by his Sovereign to govern and protect. . . .

At the period of the mutiny the feeling of aversion was intensified into deadly hatred. For a season this hatred was shared by the entire mass of our countrymen. Invectives against the treacherous, blood-thirsty Mussulman, ironical sneers about the 'mild Hindoo', were nuts alike to the civilian and the planter. The latter rejoiced to hear the world acknowledge that his estimate of the native had been correct throughout. But this glimpse of happiness was too bright to last. This sweet vision of a Utopia of rampant Anglo-Saxons and 'damned niggers' melted away as swiftly as it had arisen, and disclosed the stern reality in all its horrid nakedness: a land flowing indeed with *ghi* and indigo, but peopled by a race of free peasants, possessed of an ancient interest in the soil, and by an oppressed and disheartened community of Englishmen, whose unnatural mother-country refused to recognize any distinction in civic rights between a nigger doomed to everlasting torment and a white man in a state of salvation. At home the reaction against a severe and retributive policy set in with irresistible strength. People fell to repenting their recent excesses, in sackcloth and ashes; or, to speak more accurately, in pamphlets and May meetings. The official society out here soon followed suit, and the unfortunate

settler found himself in the plight of a colonial Abdiel, 'faithful only he' to the great principles of the debasement of the native, the domination of the Anglo-Saxon, and the 'development of the resources of India' into English pockets. Always sore upon the question of the social and political condition of the native, he now became positively raw and festering. The events of the last few years have certainly not been of a nature to soothe his injured soul. His morbid detestation of the Bengalees, as displayed in the pages of the local journals, would be ludicrous, if there could be a ludicrous side to a phenomenon so painful and ill-omened. One unfortunate correspondent, who happened to make use of the expression, 'our native brethren', was lately treated to a column of indignant remonstrance and ill-tempered satire. A certain official, in answer to an affectionate address presented to him by a large number of wealthy and influential Hindoos, spoke of 'the two great races' who occupy India. Next morning he was taken to task firmly but respectfully for having been weak enough to call the natives a 'great race', and place them by implication, on an equality with Englishmen. As if this gentleman, in order to gratify the vanity and spite of any class in existence, would have chosen to insult a body of worthy men who had assembled to give him a mark of respect and devotion, by reminding them that they belonged to an inferior and subject people!

Indian India: The Penetration of Company Rule

I

THE LAND AND THE PEASANT

AN INDEX OF THE STABILITY of colonial rule is the depth to which it is prepared to interfere in the life of the people, outside the essential superficialities of 'law and order' and the limits necessary to economic exploitation. The government of the East India Company, with its politically imposed Governor-General, was by its very nature subject to transformation—under the pressures of political events in both India and Britain, as well as through the heterodox personalities of the Governors-General themselves. Fundamentally, however, its administration was one of cautious experiment, for, as its territories expanded and the Company's Peace—however jagged—replaced anarchy, it found it necessary to tackle social and economic problems for which it had no precedent. The administrators of the East India Company were fundamentally amateurs, without ideological preoccupations or basic economic theories; these were both to emerge from the thinking of the Utilitarians and the Manchester School of economists, and though these ideas were active in the last two decades of Company rule, their real application in rather different form was left to the liberal authoritarians of the last four decades of the nineteenth century. (See Part VI, p. 306 ff.)

It is not an easy task to analyse the influence of Company rule on the basic economic life of India in the second half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth, for research into economic and social conditions is of comparatively recent vintage. Furthermore, such research has been limited in scope and subject, and by doubtful statistics. The anti-British bias of some Indian historians, endeavouring to discover the golden paradise of prosperity that for them undoubtedly existed before the coming of the British, along with imperial apologists equally anxious to show the misery and poverty from which India was saved, have muddied the waters with polemical sticks. There are, however, certain factors which can be observed with reasonable objectivity.

Throughout the whole period of Indian history up to the assumption of power by the British Crown in 1858 and, to some extent, after it (see Part VI, 3), the measure of prosperity is the condition of the peasant. Three-fifths of the population were peasants, and most of the remainder were to some extent dependent upon them, either as labourers or as craftsmen who supplied implements. The non-productive elements in Indian society, the priests and the rulers, lived off agricultural surpluses—either directly, in the form of gifts or loot, or indirectly, through land-revenue.

The requirements of the peasant were comparatively simple: several acres of tillable land containing natural fertilizers, and draught-cattle to pull the plough, grind food-grains and, where necessary, to supply power to primitive irrigation machinery. Other stock was not of much interest, for the peasant was, and is, mainly vegetarian. His need was to grow sufficient food for his family, besides a surplus—usually of grain, fibre, dye, or opium—to barter or exchange for cash. To produce this, the peasant could work something like five acres of irrigated land or fifteen acres of dry as an economic holding. This, and reasonable fertility, were generally assured to the peasant in the eighteenth century.

The movements of political power in India after the collapse of the Mughal Empire absorbed large bodies of men as troops, and kept down the growth of population. Though interrupted by anarchy, the simple agriculture of the Indian peasant was not destroyed by it. But after 1750, and with the expansion of the Company's Peace, the population was established in relatively peaceful conditions and, with its high natural fertility, began to grow. With this and the gradual disbandment of irregular armies, the proportion of cultivators in the population also increased. The division—or fragmentation, as it was called—of holdings became more prevalent, because of larger live families and their corollary of more sons to inherit the land. Hindu and Muslim laws of inheritance both encouraged this distribution among the heirs. The results were innumerable small and oddly shaped pieces of land, difficult to cultivate, and in many cases infertile.

The India which the British were slowly conquering was a feudal society—a society, too, in its last stages of decay. From the time of the Mughal emperors until such later princes as Haidar Ali in Mysore, and Ranjit Singh in the Punjab, strong rulers exercised power over a varied collection of semi-feudal *estates*. Through grants of land, jobs were created 'for the boys', while at the same time a sensible unit was established for the collection of land-revenue. As strong rulers collapsed or were overthrown, these 'boys'—half officials and half landowners—attempted to establish themselves as hereditary landlords. The difficulty which the British had to meet was the

claim of this class to land rights over and above those of the actual cultivators of the soil. The problem was simply one of recognition, of a choice between landlord (*zemindar*) and peasant (*ryot*).

The making of this choice was the subject of great controversy both in India and Britain, and because of this, official policy changed almost from one year to the next. In Bengal, in the north of Madras, and—after the Mutiny—in Oudh and the North-west Provinces, the *zemindar* was recognized and revenue was collected through him. This is known as the *zemindari* system. In most of western India and Madras, assessments were in general agreed directly with the cultivator—this was the *ryotwari* system.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a change came in official policy. Thomas Law, Collector of Bihar, wrote to the President of the Revenue Board (4 October 1778) that he was in favour of encouraging 'a class of native gentleman proprietors who will gradually establish themselves in good houses with the various comforts of life'. Such an idea naturally appealed to the English, believing as they did in their own practice of taking the leaders of their country from among the landowning aristocracy. However, as ordered government spread, it was found that the *zemindari* classes were in close alliance with robbers and thugs, and that it was also extremely difficult to protect a tenant from a vicious and exploitive landlord. The tendency thereafter was towards the *ryotwari* system.

The next step after deciding *who* was to pay land-revenue was the critical one of *how much* should be paid, and whether the assessments should be permanent or variable. When the British began to administer Bengal, they found the Mughal system of land taxation still in force. This system was based on the assumption that all land belonged to the State by right of conquest, and that it was remitted only on payment of tax. The Mughals farmed out the collection of revenue to *zemindars*, who paid the tax and kept the balance of what they had squeezed out of their tenants. The British chose to recognize these tax-collectors as landlords. Under the Mughals, the peasant had paid the *zemindar* a fixed share of his produce, usually one-third of the gross. The *zemindar* in turn paid to the State nine-tenths of what he received. By custom, the *zemindar* had come to hold hereditary rights in the land on which he remitted tax to the central government. As an administrative official, he was the most important element in local government—for, apart from collecting revenue, he was also a magistrate and a police official responsible for public order.

The British at first left this system as it was, making annual assessments of the revenue, but in 1772 Warren Hastings introduced a series of experiments which resulted in considerable hardship and suffering. The settlements

(leases) were made out for a period of five years, and the right to farm (or collect) the revenue was sold by auction. This system was soon abandoned in favour of annual settlements—with chaotic results. The attempt, by ignorant and inefficient young Englishmen interested only in making a quick fortune, to displace the *zemindari* class with its stake in the soil, completely disrupted the whole rural life of Bengal.

Back in Britain, the landowning rulers—still sticking to their belief that the *zemindar* was only a dark-skinned version of themselves—insisted on new regulations. Pitt's Act of 1784 contained a clause which ruled that annual leases should be abandoned and that a permanent settlement should be made. Because of this mistaken analogy of Whig landowner and Indian *zemindar* a settlement was imposed on the land without real reference to the actual nature of land tenure in India—the hereditary role of *zemindar* was confused with that of proprietor.

In 1789, a settlement for ten years was made, and in 1793 Cornwallis, now at the end of his period of office, urged that the settlement be made permanent. This was done in Bengal, Bihar, and Banaras (Benares). By the Permanent Settlement, the *zemindar* was recognized as proprietor. The first result of the new regulation was that the assessment for tax was made too high, mainly because British officials were ignorant of the agricultural possibilities under existing conditions. Because of the high assessment, many *zemindars* were unable to pay their taxes. To the British, the remedy was precise—a landowner could be sold up. They were, and were replaced by speculators from Calcutta. In Mughal times, a defaulting *zemindar* would have been arrested and beaten, but his hereditary rights would not have been attacked. One result of the replacement of the old-style *zemindar* by a new landowning class was the establishment of stability and security, for the new owners of the land were naturally 'loyal' to the British who had made it possible for them to acquire land which could be used as merchandise, to be sold or speculated with.

With the establishment of the Permanent Settlement came also a new status for the peasant. If the *zemindar* was recognized as the actual owner of the land, the peasant must in consequence be a rent-paying tenant and liable to eviction. The traditional rights of the peasant were disregarded in the essentially English concept of ownership imposed by the Permanent Settlement. It was not until 1859 that the Bengal Land Act was passed in an attempt to protect the interest of the peasant. The new *zemindari* class benefited greatly from the terms of the Permanent Settlement. The Company's Peace assured an increase in population and a consequent extension of cultivation to what was previously waste land. Income from rents increased, but the assessment of land for tax remained unchanged. Some *zemindars*—

the Tagores, from which family the Nobel prize-winner and poet, Rabin-dranath Tagore, was to emerge, are an example—spent their new wealth on the arts and public welfare. Others remained absentee landlords.

The situation of the peasants was, however, very different. Before the coming of the British, they had no occupancy right and their taxes were a proportion of their production. Under the new order, the unit of tax—rent would be a better word—was the area of land, fertile or infertile, occupied by the peasant. 'When a *ryot* has occupied and paid rent for land for two years', states a revenue letter from the Court of Directors to the government of Madras (22 January 1822), 'he is in fact the proprietor and is, in fact, saddled with the rent of it as long as he can pay.' The peasant paid rent often on land he was no longer cultivating. The peasant, realizing that his occupancy rights also meant that he could sell or mortgage his land (this being coupled with the rise in land values because of population increases), turned to the village money-lender. This pernicious individual can hardly be said to have existed before the Permanent Settlement. As rent had to be paid in cash, and the peasant had to dispose of part of his produce for money in order to pay this rent, there grew up the tyranny of the village grain-dealer—who was usually the money-lender as well. The *ryot* had to begin to think in terms of cash values, of which he had no experience and which left him wide open to the superior cunning of the shopkeeper and goldsmith. The early nineteenth century saw the start of India's immense agricultural indebtedness, which still remains today an unyielding obstacle to progress in the Indian village.

II

MERCHANTS AND CRAFTSMEN

As we have seen (p. 188 ff.), the export trade in cotton piece-goods for which India was renowned in Mughal times had been destroyed by import discrimination in Europe and the advancement of machine production in England. By 1800, England was exporting machine-made cloth to India at just the time when European markets were closed to Indian products by the Napoleonic Wars and, afterwards, by economic nationalism. This, and the principles of Free Trade, which would not allow protection for Indian handicrafts, destroyed indigenous weaving as an industry and confined it to the production of homespun for village use.

Craftsmen engaged in the production of luxury goods—delicate muslins from Dacca, silks from Murshidabad, brocades from Ahmadabad, shawls from Kashmir, enamelling and *bidri* work from the Punjab—suffered decline

for very different reasons. Very few of these products were exported to Europe, for they were produced originally for a wealthy and leisured aristocracy. Most luxury crafts were extremely local in distribution, for the lack of roads, the prevalence of robbers, and other difficulties restricted the movement of valuable products. The markets for such crafts were dependent upon the patronage of local rulers, or the pilgrim traffic. In the anarchy of the late eighteenth century, with the rise and fall of rulers and States, patronage was often cut off and the crafts died for want of a customer. They were rarely revived. Under British rule, new social classes emerged with rather different standards of luxury and little inclination to aristocratic patronage. Much of the luxury production of Indian craftsmen was the conspicuous waste of a feudal way of life, already moribund before the coming of the British.

Merchants, on the other hand, reaped the advantages of security and a stable administration. Inland trade flourished as anarchy disappeared, the population increased and demand grew. Free Trade ideas also helped, for, in 1835, inland transit duties were abolished. It is to the provisions of the Charter Act of 1813 that we must turn for the establishment of trade on a new footing. This Act cancelled the East India Company's monopoly of commerce and opened India to the private trader. But the expansion of trade was neither sudden nor extravagant, for the new merchants lacked capital, which preferred to invest in the safer areas of Europe and America. The very size of India demanded large-scale operations, and for this there was insufficient capital. This led to over-extension of activities and the 1830's saw the collapse of a number of 'agency houses'. These were firms managing a quantity of highly varied activities. It was not only the lack of capital which hampered trade, but also the very obstacles of geography. India was a land almost without communications in any industrial sense. Business therefore turned to the government for its assistance. The administration, after the abolition of its commercial monopoly, had no economic policy and preferred not to have one, but pressure in England and India compelled it to give some aid to merchants. This it did very slowly, and to no particular plan. The administration of Lord Hastings saw attempts to refurbish Mughal irrigation canals. An iron-works was established with government aid in 1825. A road was built from Bombay to Poona in 1830, and steamships began to open up rivers. In 1834, government tea gardens were opened, planted with tea-seeds specially brought from China.

In the matter of industrial finance, banks were established in the three Presidencies of Bombay, Bengal, and Madras, but the expansion of capital investment was prevented once again by lack of efficient communications—as *The Oxford History of India* puts it, 'You cannot feed large-scale industry or distribute mass-produced products by bullock-wagons, or hitch modern

industry to a camel.' Steam navigation of rivers was extended. In 1839, work was begun on the Grand Trunk Road from Calcutta to Delhi. Although there were now roads, the transport that used them was still slow and inefficient. In 1849, the first agreements for the establishment of a railway were signed by Lord Dalhousie, and his plans were defined in a Minute of 1853. By the outbreak of the Mutiny, some two hundred miles of track had been laid.

The immense extension of railway networks, after the assumption of power by the Crown in 1858, and its industrial consequences are dealt with elsewhere (see p. 317 ff.). The development of trade in India before 1858 was merely a small preparation for what was to come. The consequences of a new system of communication in the social, economic, and political life of India were to be decisive.

III

THE HAND OF GOVERNMENT

The grip of an administration on those it rules depends upon the fingers of the law, on their strength, and on how much of the life of the people they can hold. Government, in its Western sense of a central administration following certain patterns or principles, was slow to emerge in Company's India. The reasons for this are fairly obvious when it is remembered that, until the Regulating Act of 1773, the administration of the Company's territories was entirely in the hands of the Board of Directors of a trading corporation which had its head office thousands of miles away in London. There was, in fact, until 1773, no central authority in the Company's possessions—the three Presidencies of Bombay, Bengal, and Madras being governed separately from London. By the Regulating Act, the Governor-General in Calcutta was given a very ill-defined authority over the other two Presidencies, but in 1783 this authority was extended to include control of relations with the country powers (i.e. the native States) and an overall responsibility in time of war. In 1793, the Governor-General was granted the right of superseding the governor of a Presidency, when the Governor-General was within its territories. From this time forward, apart from the privilege of corresponding directly with London, which was retained by the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras, a central direction was effectively in the hands of the Governor-General in Bengal. Pitt's India Act of 1784, and the Act of 1786, finally gave the Governor-General absolute power, for the former reduced the number of members of his Council to three, and the latter permitted him to act without their consent or approval. The

Council became merely an advisory body without power except to register its disagreement.

The Charter Act of 1833 also gave the Governor-General the power to originate and pass legislative acts binding upon the whole of the Company's territories, and for this purpose a Law Member was added to his Council—the first appointment being Macaulay. It is from this date that the Company really appears as an Indian State, ruled by one man who at the same time begins to assume the outward show of power—proconsular, but nevertheless real and effective.

The arms of the Governor-General were the civil service and the army. Originally, civil administrators were members of the Company's commercial staff, seconded to the revenue or other posts, and it was left to them to separate trade from government and to form a civil service untainted by commercial preoccupation. Up until this time, Indian officials had been retained in the law courts and in the lower levels of district administration—following a system inherited, though often modified, from the Mughals. Cornwallis, however, excluded Indians from the higher appointments and by the Charter Act of 1793 all posts worth over £500 per annum were reserved to the European members of the Company's service. By paying the civil service well, and prohibiting its members from engaging in speculative trade, corruption was reduced and a better quality of recruit attracted; though certain individuals, particularly those seconded to the courts of native rulers, continued to take bribes and the like until the 1830's. The Company even established a training college at Haileybury in England for recruits to their service. There still remained, however, the privilege of nomination to the civil service and the army, reserved to the Directors in London. This meant, firstly, that all appointments were for Britons only, and usually for friends and relations of the nominator. Though the Act of 1833 declared that every native of India was not prevented, just by being a native, from holding an appointment, he had in practice no chance of nomination. In 1853, patronage was abolished and open examination substituted, but it was not until 1864 that an Indian actually entered the civil service. Nevertheless, under the administration of Lord William Bentinck, Indians were permitted to hold three of the positions in the lower ranks of the judiciary, up to the position of subordinate judge.

The Company's army in India had begun with a few Europeans and a number of ill-trained sepoys acting as a bodyguard and as military police keeping order amongst the Company's servants. It was the impact of the Anglo-French Wars, as we have seen (p. 205 ff.), that permitted Stringer Lawrence to become the Father of the Indian army, and its first regiment, the Madras Europeans, to have the distinction of having that rather unusual

soldier, Robert Clive, as an officer. Each Presidency army was independent until the Mutiny of 1857, but by the Acts of 1773 and 1783 the Governor-General was given control of all three. The biggest of these armies was that of Bengal, for it was to that Presidency that the next stage of expansion was to fall, as well as the brunt of the horrors of 1857. In India at the same time were regiments of royal troops sent to reinforce the Company's army at times of crisis, and later left in semi-permanent garrison. When the Company's forces revolted in 1857, it was royal troops, in the main, who restored peace and authority.

The Company's army was in fact a native army, trained upon Western lines, and officered by Europeans. The Indian element was, naturally, the larger—in 1830, 187,000 men and, at the outbreak of the Mutiny, 200,000. The wholly European regiments numbered 16,000 officers and men. In 1796, a reorganization of the Company's forces created a surplus of European officers to the establishment, as Indian officers were permitted to command up to company level. At a time of expansion, such 'surplus' officers were often seconded to civil duties, and the 'soldier-political', as he came to be called, was often given appointments of pioneer importance. These men were usually the best material available, but the result was to cause envy amongst civilians and not-so-fortunate military colleagues, and to drain from the Company's army some of its most competent and progressive elements.

The Indian members of the army were undoubtedly the most efficient native troops in Asia. A professional body of men, their attitude was one of professional loyalty, uninspired by patriotic ideals. In the early years, their traditional customs and religious prejudices were allowed full rein, and they were consequently antagonistic to change, and proud only of existing conditions and procedure. As changes in military practice—dress, ordnance, and drill—were introduced, the sepoys considered them as attacks upon their entrenched positions, both religious and social, and reacted to them by mutinies, such as those at Vellore in 1806 and at Barrackpore in 1824.

The Mughal police system had been based upon the military forces of local governors. A new system of civil police was begun by Cornwallis with the appointment of a Superintendent of Police for Calcutta in 1796. This was extended to the country districts in the following year. Unfortunately, the police were badly paid and consequently repressive and corrupt. Their existence, free to some extent from local pressures and loyalties, nevertheless guaranteed to the central authority another element under its direct control.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

In Mughal times, each religious and social community was permitted to follow its own civil laws and to administer according to its traditional patterns. Criminal law, on the other hand, was universal in application and followed the strict Islamic code with its attendant punishments of mutilation and deprivation of rights. This code was administered by *Qazis* appointed by the central government or the local governor. The code did not apply to the rulers themselves, who could not be tried in the courts. The British did not at the beginning interfere in the administration of justice. In 1774, however, a Supreme Court on *English* lines, administering *English* law, was established in Calcutta, though just which classes of people and categories of crime it was to pronounce upon were ill-defined. The Act of 1781 limited the Supreme Court's authority and the application of English law to Europeans. Cornwallis removed from Islamic law the crueller punishments—until, in fact, it became less harsh than English law. Cornwallis, on replacing the higher ranks of the judiciary with Europeans, did not at the same time give them any code to administer. The reliance of English judges on the 'experts' on local laws slowed up justice as well as, quite unwittingly, perverting it. In 1833 an Indian Law Commission was appointed which, after nearly thirty years, produced the Indian Penal Code of 1861.

The actual day-to-day *administration* of justice presented serious problems when, in 1790, all civil and criminal courts came under the control of the Company. A Central Criminal Court was established in Calcutta and four touring 'courts of circuit', centred upon Calcutta, Murshidabad, Patna, and Dacca. These superior courts tried cases too serious for the permanent district courts. The local courts (*diwani adalat*) were renamed as district, or *zillah*, courts, with courts of appeal in the same four towns. Unfortunately, this impressive display of the new justice was more apparent than real. The new judges, Englishmen, were sometimes very young, and nearly always without knowledge of the language or customs of the people to whom they were supposed to dispense justice. The legal consequences of the new settlements and the quick apprehension of the people that justice was no longer a tool of the executive resulted in a torrent of lawsuits. Dependent as they were on their 'expert' advisers, the European judges who were involved in the web of native lawsuits gave out decisions with great slowness, anxious to judge on the 'merits of the case'—if they could disentangle them from the mass of plea and counter-plea. The result was a barrier to justice at district

court level. By 1812, some 163,000 cases in Bengal alone awaited hearing and judgment. Fundamentally, the remarkable thing was that justice was done at all, for the law itself was Hindu or Muslim, and the procedure and interpretation, British. In the attempt to solve these apparently irreconcilable difficulties, there grew up a class of Indian lawyers, known as pleaders, who acted as interpreters of both sides, further adding to the confusion and bringing profit only to themselves. The legal profession in India, which must be numerically one of the largest in the world, fattened itself in the no-man's-land between two traditions, fashioning—to mix metaphors—the square peg of Hindu and Muslim customary law to fit the round hole of English procedure.

The centre of British rule in India, from this time forward until the end of the Empire, was the District. British India was divided into areas which would permit local administration to function adequately, while at the same time allowing the rulers at least to be aware of the characteristics of those they ruled. Bengal and Bihar were originally divided, by Sir John Macpherson, into thirty-five districts, which were later reduced to twenty-three by Cornwallis. Bombay had thirteen such areas, Sind three, and Madras between twenty and twenty-six.

The pyramid of District rule had at its apex the Collector who, as the name implies, collected the revenue. Next came the Judge, and after him, as the guardian of public order, the Magistrate. In Bengal, for most of the time up to the Mutiny, the Judge was the head of the District. Elsewhere it was the Collector. Above the head of the District, was the Governor of the Presidency, but after the annexation of the Punjab a new style of senior official, directly responsible to the Governor-General, was created with the title of Chief Commissioner. The first such appointments were in the Punjab in 1853 and in Oudh in 1856.

The District officers were encased within the Regulations of the Cornwallis Code of 1793. These Regulations, stating explicitly the function of each office, have been called the 'steel frame of British India'. Unfortunately, though they supplied the guarantee of ordered and incorrupt administration, they had serious handicaps when applied to unsettled areas acquired by territorial expansion. The result was a typically British compromise. New territories were labelled 'non-Regulation', and it was understood that the *letter* of the Regulation could be malleable to local conditions, but the *spirit* would be observed. The Delhi territory in 1803, Tenasserim, Assam, and Arakan in 1824, the Saugar and Narbada territories in 1818 and the Punjab in 1849 became non-Regulation provinces. There, the Collector was given another title—that of Deputy Commissioner, and he could appoint military officers to civil duties, on his own authority.

THE COMPANY AND THE STATES UNTIL 1848

The relations of the East India Company with the dependent States were of great complexity, and their elucidation in any detail is a subject for the student of law rather than of history. Apart, however, from the prolixities of treaties, these relations represent the last problem the administrators of British India had to solve as they moved towards the final forms of executive power. Originally, as we have seen, the Company tried to consider itself as only another element in the *native* structure of power in India. Its early administrators would have been content to remain a country power, following indigenous forms of government and, in so doing, supplying the stability and security in which to continue their mercantile purposes. The concept could only have worked in an India in which the existence of other stable entities was assured. If Mughal authority, even in an attenuated Empire, had continued, the Company's territories in India would have remained as enclaves of trade superimposed on the traditional patterns of native government. Even with the collapse of the Mughal dominion, if it had been possible to surround Bengal with a secure barrier of native States, it is probable that British power in India would have remained around the original settlements in Bengal. However, the anarchy that ruled Central India in the eighteenth century and the emergence of the Marathas as an apparently overwhelming force endangered too closely the heartland of the Company's possessions—Bengal.

The final defeat of the Marathas as the result of Lord Hastings's administration forced the Company into the position of a paramount power rather than one amongst competitive equals. The position of paramountcy implies the existence of dependents and their existence in turn implies some policy of relationship with the larger authority. Hastings's method was to freeze the *status quo* by assuming the feudal rights of overlord to vassal with the many small States, and making subsidiary treaty with the larger elements. Though, in actual fact, no *doctrine* of paramountcy was explicitly stated at this time—because, in the main, the Company still accepted the very shadowy figure of the Mughal Emperor as the ultimate source of authority—in practice, the Governor-General acted as if he were the supreme government, which, in terms of real power, he was.

This real power was, in some cases such as Hyderabad, disguised behind diplomatic phrases which seemed to imply equality. Other apparently independent States, such as Oudh, were reduced to subordinate status by treaties. States which recognized the supreme authority of the Company in

a treaty signed between them and the Governor-General—as in the case of the Rajput States—represent a further category. In another, were States (e.g. Mysore) which were in effect creations of the Company and existed because of a specific treaty. The remainder were old or new petty rajas, confirmed or created by the expansion of the Company's power, and those who transferred their allegiance from a previous overlord to the new, following feudal precedent. The Nizam of Hyderabad presents an exception, for, despite attempts to establish his subsidiary position, he maintained his exemption from the explicit paramountcy of the government of India until as late as 1926.

In general, up until the administration of Lord Dalhousie (1848–56), the British refrained from interference in the internal affairs of the subsidiary or dependent Indian States, though they exercised ultimate control in times of civil unrest through the presence of troops in the State—paid for by the State, but officered by detached members of the Company's army. On the other hand, the Company rigorously controlled the *external* relations of the States. This meant that each ruler was secure from invasions from without and, by the existence of an independent force, from revolution within. Within the barbed wire of the Company's Peace, the ruler could do whatever he pleased except act independently. Personal ambitions were petrified, no great office in the imperial government was any longer open to the great man or the brilliant adventurer. The ruler very often, to escape the tedium, turned to luxurious and vicious living. Saddled already with a Company force which was very expensive and yet over which he had no control, a ruler would often raise his own army, incompetently managed, often months in arrears of payment, mutinous, rapacious, and ruinous to the State finances.

Strict adherence to a policy of non-interference left these States as islands of flame in a dry forest—a menace to the security of the Company's dominions. For this reason, and this reason alone, the Governor-General was sometimes, and with great reluctance, forced to act. Examples are the assumption of rule (not the annexation) in Mysore in 1831 (the State was handed back to its ruling house in 1881), the annexation of Coorg in 1834, and the destruction of the forces of the Amirs of Sind in 1843.

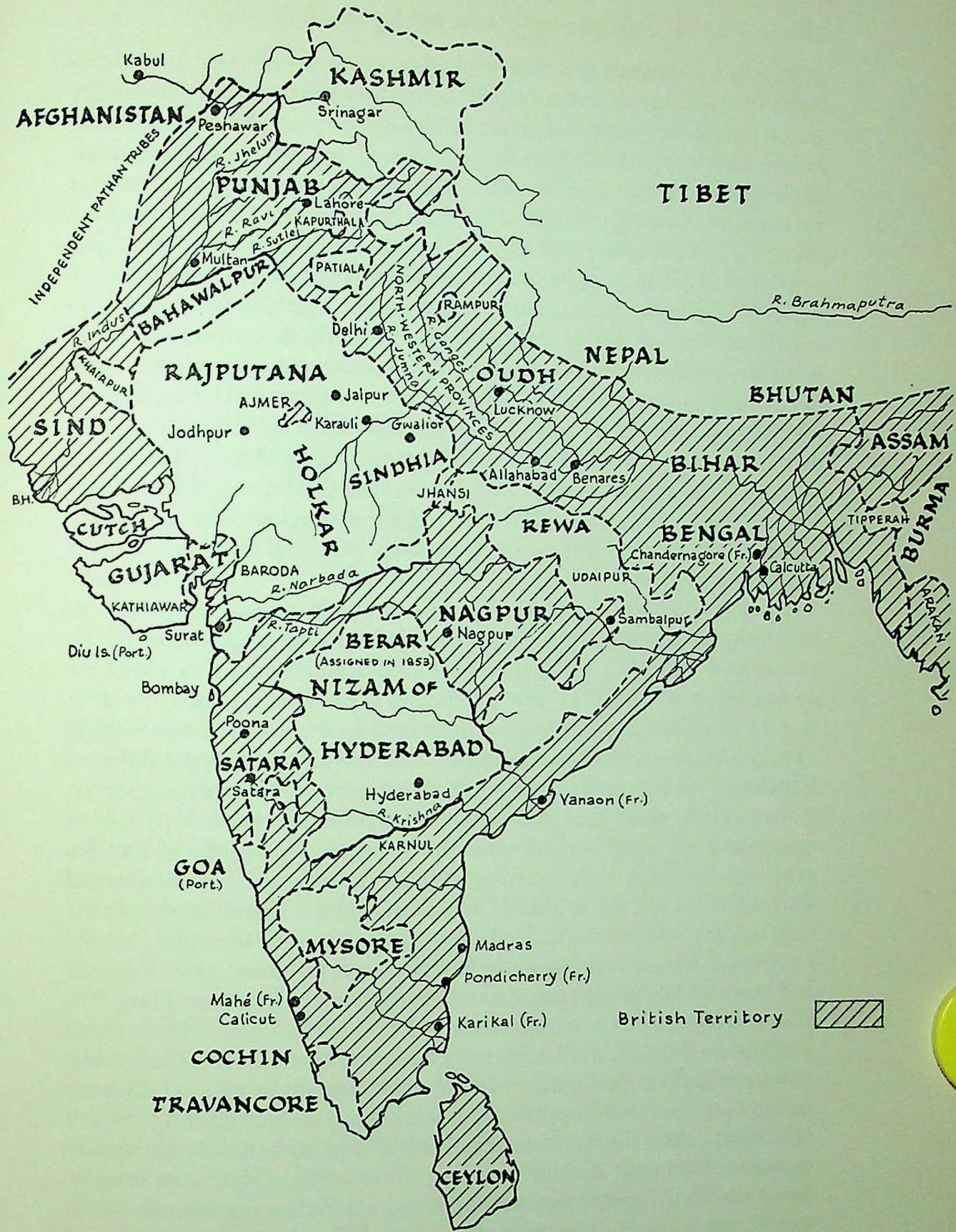
VI

DALHOUSIE AND THE POLICY OF ANNEXATION

The coming of Lord Dalhousie to the appointment of Governor-General in 1848 signified the end of one era and the beginning of another. Dalhousie is the first real representative of the imperial concept, an administrator who

was also an ideologue. His period is one of aggressive Westernization, and the Punjab was its monument. If the prophet of Utilitarianism was Macaulay, Dalhousie was its St Paul. Cold, arrogant, and conscious of the superiority of Western forms and progress, Dalhousie converted the government of India into the champion of a modern, vital, yet contemptuous Imperialism. His aim was the construction of a Western unitary State, disciplined and powerful, a projection of that fantastic surge of self-confidence which so characterizes early Victorian England. Dalhousie defined himself as a 'curious compound of despot and radical'. In fact, the archetype of Liberal authoritarianism (see p. 306ff.). Bentham and James Mill considered the enlightened despot, the authoritarian reformer, as the ideal ruler for India. But it must be remembered that Dalhousie had no intellectual dogmas nor policies derived from abstract political philosophers. His Utilitarianism was characteristic of his age, for it was the result of the logic of the man of affairs, the practical turn of mind of the great administrator.

The working of the Dalhousie 'Method' can be seen at its best in the Punjab. After the Second Sikh War (see p. 246) the decision to annex the former kingdom of Ranjit Singh was made in 1849. This was to be an annexation with a difference. The foundations of the 'Punjab System', as it was later to be known, were the methods used in the non-Regulation provinces, particularly those established in the Delhi territory by Charles Metcalfe. The Punjab was divided into divisions and districts, each under a single commissioner and deputy commissioner. The deputy commissioner was collector, magistrate, and judge, and there was no separate judiciary. The reasons for this are many, but the principal ones were those of economy and the far more important one of concentrating executive and judicial functions in the hands of one pioneer official. The giants of the Punjab, John Lawrence, Herbert Edwardes, John Nicholson, and others, saw in this system the fulfilment of their wish to be 'Fathers' of the people, for all were impelled by an Old Testament belief in the parallels between the Heavenly Father and his earthly imitators. God's name was as frequently—more frequently, perhaps—in their mouths as that of the Governor-General, and He was assumed to participate in the structure of power. There are many true tales to attest this attitude, such as that of John Lawrence offering public prayers before the wondering Sikh nobles and citizens of Lahore to 'Almighty God through the mediation of our Lord and Saviour' as he cut the first sod of the new railway line. But though this sort of thing was almost commonplace, and elsewhere produced the arrogant contempt of native traditions and prejudices which led to the Mutiny of 1857, in the Punjab it is symbolic only of the rulers themselves and not of the methods they used to rule. One would have expected such diverse personalities, scattered about the Punjab



INDIA ON THE EVE OF THE SEPOY REVOLT 1856

at great distances from a central authority, to act in arbitrary and undisciplined ways, but this was not so, for though they had personal responsibility and authority they were also accountable for what they did. The administration of the Punjab was planned upon military lines and though in questions of executive strategy the man on the spot had discretion to act, his actions were subject to the right of appeal to higher authority. To ensure the validity of this right, each officer had to keep records, and any case sent for higher decision resulted in a demand for a personal report. The District Officer was also subject to interrogation and inspection. The 'Golden Age' of the Punjab System—so dear to retired Indian civil servants—when, as Herbert Edwardes's widow wrote, '... Henry Lawrence would send us off to great distances: Edwardes to Bunnoo, Nicholson to Peshawar, Abbot to Hazara, Lumsden to somewhere else, etc., giving us no more helpful directions than these: "Settle the country; make the people happy and take care there are no rows,"' lasted from 1846 to 1848, the interregnum between the two Sikh Wars. As soon as annexation took place, the modernizing zeal of Dalhousie thrust, with amazing energy, the framework of a civilized State upon a bewildered peasantry.

There was nothing haphazard or fatherly about the administration—its great men were great within a tightly controlled system of government. The giants of the Punjab, with their great bearded heads, shouting their Biblical apophthegms and striding about like Old Testament prophets, insisting on 'simple' values and a patriarchal sentiment for the eternal Indian village, have hidden from sight the unsentimental Dalhousie who grasped the non-Regulation system as the instrument of his personal control—a cheaper, more efficient, more energetic means of rapid modernization. It was a tremendous advantage to Dalhousie that the system he established and the men who worked it had, according to them, the approval and assistance of their God—a sort of celestial Governor-General. Whatever the divine sanction, the system was justified on a more rational plane. The Punjab, which had bitterly and efficiently fought British conquest, remained loyal and tranquil when, nine years later, the Mutiny threatened it. The Sikhs even helped their conquerors to restore order.

After the Punjab, Dalhousie turned his attention to the Indian States which, as has been noted, remained after 1818 generally in a state of decaying isolation, their rulers supported by local forces commanded by British officers and their internal corruption uninterfered with as long as security prevailed. Dalhousie decided to change all this. His reasons were straightforward—British government was superior to any Indian administration and, in the new India he contemplated, there could be no place for enclaves of bad government, for they reflected upon the moral integrity of the paramount

power. The instrument was not to be a continuation of paramountcy—a vague system in which the *status quo* was preserved like a specimen in formaldehyde, and a watch kept to see that no-one knocked the jar off the shelf—but annexation, and the spread of the Punjab System.

The paramount power, namely the Governor-General, had since the Hastings administration assumed the right of interference in the government of a subordinate State in certain circumstances. The most important of these was the question of succession. The British government maintained the overriding right of recognition of a new ruler and the natural corollary of being the arbiter in cases of dispute—the Governor-General had in fact exercised this right in a number of cases. This was reasonably straightforward where there existed a natural heir, but what if there was none? From the point of view of the Hindu ruler, there was no problem, for Hindu law permitted the adoption of an heir who in every legal sense was the equivalent of an heir-of-the-body. Dalhousie, taking the right of recognition a stage further, pronounced that an adoption valid by Hindu law was only binding on the paramount power if the heir was recognized by the Governor-General. If this recognition was withheld, the State would 'lapse' to the supreme government. Again, however, a distinction was drawn between States created by, or directly dependent on the Company, i.e. inherited by the Company as a consequence of the annexation of the former overlord, and those States which had had an independent existence before the coming of the British. This was all very well in theory but in practice the line between the two categories was tenuous. If the doctrine had been fully applied, Hindu princely India would have virtually disappeared. The very threat of such proceedings, running as it did directly counter to Hindu tradition, was sufficient to build up a climate of unease which added yet another 'cause' to the Mutiny of 1857.

In practice, annexation by 'lapse' was effective in the case of Satara in 1848, of Jaitpur and Sambalpur in 1849, Baghat in 1850, Udaipur in 1852, Jhansi in 1853, and Nagpur in 1854. Baghat and Udaipur were restored after the Mutiny. The most important of these annexations were those of Satara—which had actually been revived in 1818 by the British—Nagpur, which had a population of four millions, mainly Marathas, and Jhansi. The annexation of the last so antagonized the Rani that during the Mutiny she rose against the British and might, without too great a stretch of the imagination, be remembered as India's Boadicea. Deep resentment was caused by these apparently high-handed acquisitions of territory by the Company.

Another excuse for annexation, and a more reasonable one, was that of internal misgovernment. This was to have its principal example in the kingdom of Oudh. This State had been bedevilled by treaties with the

British who had continually threatened to take over the administration but had never done so, their attitude being alternately that of righteous anger and contemptuous indifference. But by 1851 it was obvious that the conditions of misrule and of oppression that reigned in Oudh must end. Dalhousie wished only to take over the administration, but the Directors in London insisted upon annexation, which was effected in 1856 and added the Muslim princes to the ranks of the fearful.

The third element in Dalhousie's policy was the abolition of titular sovereignties. Among these abolitions was that of the adoptive son of the last Peshwa of the Marathas, Baji Rao. Baji Rao died in 1853 and his pension was not transmitted to his heir Dandu Pant—known as the Nana Sahib, one of the leaders of the mutineers and infamous in British-Indian history for the massacre of British women and children at Cawnpore (Kanpur). The last Mughal king of Delhi, Bahadur Shah, was saved by the Court of Directors, but only because his heir agreed to abandon the imperial title and vacate the palace at Delhi on his succession.

Dalhousie was the greatest innovator in British-Indian history. The effects of his administration were deep and in many cases lasting. They also, for they went too far too quickly, produced the atavistic reaction of traditional India in the Mutiny of 1857. But though those terrible times modified the brasher elements in Dalhousie's method, he was without doubt not only the founder of Imperial India but of the modern unitary State of the Republic which followed Independence, many years later.

*Some Liberal and Utilitarian Opinions upon the Nature of British Rule
before the Assumption of Power by the Crown*

'Upon the whole then, we cannot avoid recognizing in the people of Hindostan, a race of men lamentably degenerate and base; retaining but a feeble sense of moral obligation; yet obstinate in their disregard of what they know to be right, governed by malevolent and licentious passions, strongly exemplifying the effects produced on society by a great and general corruption of manners, and sunk in misery by their vices, in a country peculiarly calculated by its natural advantages, to promote the prosperity of its inhabitants.'

Charles Grant: *Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain, particularly with respect to Morals and on the Means of Improving it. Written chiefly in the Year 1792*
(privately printed, 1797), p. 71.

'Christianity, independently of its effects on a future state of existence, has been acknowledged even by avowed sceptics, to be, beyond all other institutions that ever existed, favourable to the temporal interests and happiness of man: and never was there a country where there is a greater need than in India for the diffusion of its genial influence.'

Speech of Wilberforce, 22 June 1813:

Hansard, First Series, Vol. XXVI, p. 8.

'In considering the affairs of the world as under the control of the Supreme Disposer, and those distant territories . . . providentially put into our hands . . . is it not necessary to conclude that they were given to us, not merely that we might draw an annual profit from them, but that we might diffuse among their inhabitants, long sunk in darkness, vice, and misery, the light and benign influence of the truth, the blessings of well-regulated society, the improvements and comforts of active industry? . . . In every progressive step of this work, we shall also serve the original design with which we visited India, that design still so important to this country—the extension of our commerce.'

Grant: *Observations*, p. 220.

' . . . let us endeavour to strike our roots into the soil by the gradual introduction and establishment of our own principles and opinions; of our laws, institutions, and manners; above all, as the source of every other improvement, of our religion, and consequently of our morals. . . . Are we so little aware of the vast superiority even of European laws and institutions, and far more of British institutions, over those of Asia, as not to be prepared to predict with confidence, that the Indian community which should have exchanged its dark and bloody superstitions for the genial influence of civil order and security, of social pleasures and domestic comforts, as to be desirous of preserving the blessings it should have acquired; and can we doubt that it would be bound even by the ties of gratitude to those who have been the honoured instruments of communicating them?'

Substance of the Speeches of William Wilberforce Esq., on the Clause in the East-India Bill for Promoting the Religious Instruction and Moral Improvement of the Natives of the British Dominions in India, on the 22nd June and the 1st & 12th of July 1813 (1813), pp. 92-3.

'The vast peninsula of India has for centuries been harassed by wars and devastation, rendering property very insecure; but if it becomes open to free trade, under one mild, liberal, and effective government, that could protect the property, laws, lives, and liberties of the subjects, what a sudden change we might not anticipate? We should not only see the palaces of the Rajah, and the houses of the Vakeels, Aumils, Shrofs, and Zemindars, furnished and decorated with the produce of English arts and manufactures, but the Ryots, who form so large a part of the Indian population, may, like the British farmers,

have a taste for foreign produce, as soon as they can acquire property enough to procure it; and this is only to be acquired to that extent under a free and liberal government, where property is held sacred. Under these circumstances trade might suddenly grow up beyond the Cape of Good Hope, to take off all the surplus manufactures that Britain can produce.'

W. Lester: *The Happy Era of One Hundred Millions of the Human Race*, 1813, pp. 39-40.

'The mere extent of empire is not necessarily an advantage. To many governments it has been cumbersome; to some it has been fatal. It will be allowed by every statesman of our time that the prosperity of a country is made up of the prosperity of those who compose the community, and that it is the most childish ambition to covet dominion which adds to no man's comfort or security. To the great trading nation, to the great manufacturing nation, no progress which any portion of the human race can make in knowledge, in taste for the conveniences of life, or in the wealth by which those conveniences are produced, can be a matter of indifference. It is scarcely possible to calculate the benefits which we might derive from the diffusion of European civilization among the vast population of the East. It would be, on the most selfish view of the case, far better for us that the people of India were well-governed and independent of us, than ill-governed and subject to us; that they were ruled by their own kings, but wearing our broadcloth, and working with our cutlery, than that they were performing their salaams to English collectors and English magistrates, but were too ignorant to value, or too poor to buy, English manufactures. To trade with civilized men is infinitely more profitable than to govern savages. That would indeed be a doting wisdom, which, in order that India might remain a dependency, would make it an useless and costly dependency; which would keep a hundred millions of men from being our customers in order that they might continue to be our slaves.'

Speech of Macaulay in Charter Debate, 10 July 1833.
(Macaulay: *Complete Works*, Vol. XI, pp. 583-4).

'We have already seen, in reviewing the Hindu form of government, that despotism, in one of its simplest and least artificial shapes, was established in Hindustan, and confirmed by laws of Divine authority. We have seen likewise, that by a division of the people into castes, and the prejudices which the detestable views of the Brahmins raised to separate them, a degrading and pernicious system of subordination was established among the Hindus, and the vices of such a system were there carried to a more destructive height than among any other people. And we have seen that by a system of priestcraft, built upon the most enormous and tormenting superstition that ever harassed and degraded any portion of mankind, their minds were enchained more intolerably

than their bodies; in short that, despotism and priestcraft taken together, the Hindus, in mind and body, were the most enslaved portion of the human race.'

James Mill: *History of British India* (2nd edn 1820), Vol. II, pp. 166-7.

'Again: ignorance is the natural concomitant of poverty; a people wretchedly poor are always ignorant; but poverty is the effect of bad laws and bad government; and is never a characteristic of any people who are governed well. It is necessary, therefore, before education can operate to any great result, that the poverty of the people should be redressed; that their laws and government should operate beneficently.'

Mill: *ibid.*, Vol. v, pp. 541-3.

'... we must guard against the supposition that it is chiefly by holding out means and opportunities of official distinction that we expect our Government to benefit the millions subjected to their authority. We have repeatedly expressed to you a very different sentiment. Facilities of official advancement can little effect the bulk of the people under any Government, and perhaps least under a good, but [it is] by repressing crime, by securing and guarding property, by creating confidence, by ensuring to industry the fruit of its labour, by protecting men in the undisturbed enjoyment of their rights, and in the unfettered exercise of their faculties, that Governments best minister to the public wealth and happiness.'

Public Despatch to India, 10 December 1834, para. 109; cited in C. Ilbert, *The Government of India*, p. 530.

'The mode of increasing the riches of the body of the people is a discovery no less easy than sure. Take a little from them in the way of taxes; prevent them from injuring one another; and make no absurd laws to restrain them in the harmless disposal of their property and labour. Light taxes and good laws; nothing more is wanting for national and individual prosperity all over the globe.'

Mill: *op.cit.*, Vol. v, pp. 537-8.

'We do not mean that all the people of India should live under the same law; far from it. . . . We know how desirable that object is; but we also know that it is unattainable. We know that respect must be paid to feelings generated by differences of religion, of nation, and of caste. Much, I am persuaded, may be done to assimilate the different systems of law without wounding those feelings. But, whether we assimilate those systems or not, let us ascertain them; let us digest them. We propose no rash innovation; we wish to give no shock to the prejudices of any part of our subjects. Our principle is simply this; uniformity where you can have it; diversity where you must have it; but in all cases certainty.'

Macaulay, 10 July 1833 (*Complete Works*, Vol. XI, pp. 581-2).

PRINCIPAL DATES

A.D.	
1774	Supreme Court established in Calcutta
1785	Charles Wilkins translates <i>Bhagavad Gita</i>
1790	Sir William Jones translates <i>Sakuntala</i>
1796	Superintendent of Police appointed in Calcutta
1798-9	Fourth Mysore War
1799	Fall of Seringapatam, death of Tipu Sultan Ranjit Singh ruler of Lahore
1801	Annexation of the Carnatic and part of Oudh
1802	Treaty of Bassein with Peshwa Baji Rao
1803	Occupation of Delhi by Lord Lake
1803-5	Second Maratha War
1806	The Vellore Mutiny
1811	Occupation of Java
1813	Charter Act: Free Trade permitted, and Christian missionaries admitted
1814-16	War with Nepal
1817	Mill's <i>History of India</i> published
1818-19	First British house in Simla
1819-27	Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay
1820-4	Munro, Governor of Madras
1824	Mutiny at Barrackpore
1824-6	First Burmese War. Arakan and Tenasserim annexed
1827	Siege of Bharatpur
1828-35	Lord William Bentinck, Governor-General
1829	Brahmo Samaj founded
1829-37	Prohibition of suttee. Suppression of thuggee
1830-3	Ram Mohun Roy in England
1831	Administration of Mysore taken over
1832	Great Reform Bill passed
1833	Charter Act. Company's trade monopoly abolished Indian Law Commission appointed
1834	Coorg annexed Government establishes tea gardens

Principal Dates

295

1835	Macaulay's Minute on Education. English made official language Abolition of inland transit duties
1836-42	Lord Auckland, Governor-General
1839	Death of Ranjit Singh Work begun on Grand Trunk Road between Calcutta and Delhi
1839-42	First Afghan War
1842-4	Lord Ellenborough, Governor-General
1843	Conquest of Sind
1844-8	Lord Hardinge, Governor-General
1845-6	First Sikh War
1848-9	Second Sikh War Annexation of the Punjab Annexation of Satara
1848-56	Lord Dalhousie, Governor-General
1852	Second Burmese War Rangoon and Pegu annexed
1853	Annexation of Jhansi Renewal of Company's Charter Abolition of patronage. Competitive examination for Civil Service Dalhousie's Railway Minute First railway opened Telegraph from Calcutta to Agra
1854	Annexation of Nagpur
1856	Annexation of Oudh Canning succeeds Dalhousie Hindu Widows Re-marriage Act
1857	Foundation of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras Universities
1857-9	The Mutiny
1858	Queen Victoria's Proclamation
1861	Indian Penal Code

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1843	Conquest of Sind
1844-8	Lord Hardinge, Governor-General
1845-6	First Sikh War
1848-9	Second Sikh War Annexation of the Punjab Annexation of Satara
1848-56	Lord Dalhousie, Governor-General
1852	Second Burmese War Rangoon and Pegu annexed
1853	Annexation of Jhansi Renewal of Company's Charter Abolition of patronage. Competitive examination for Civil Service Dalhousie's Railway Minute First railway opened Telegraph from Calcutta to Agra
1854	Annexation of Nagpur
1856	Annexation of Oudh Canning succeeds Dalhousie Hindu Widows Re-marriage Act
1857	Foundation of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras Universities
1857-9	The Mutiny
1858	Queen Victoria's Proclamation
1861	Indian Penal Code

Part Six

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE
INDIAN EMPIRE

I

Imperialism at its Zenith 1859-1909

I

RELATIONS WITH THE PRINCES

ONE OF THE RESULTS of the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 was the maintenance of the structure of political boundaries in India. This removed the uncertainty of survival felt by the princes and identified their interests with those of the paramount power. The result was to petrify the frontiers of over seven hundred States occupying nearly two-fifths of India. The reasons for this attitude were twofold: a belief that having seen 'a few patches of Native government prove breakwaters in the storm which would otherwise have swept over us in one great wave' they would stand as firm in the future against internal and external threats; and the unwillingness of the English to endanger their position by continuing political and social reforms which had led to the Mutiny. After 1860 there were no further annexations.

The overriding authority of the British, though not completely formulated for some time after the Mutiny, was indispensable, and the government interfered in the administration of a State when it felt itself justified by internal conditions. On the assumption of the title of Empress of India by Queen Victoria, the princes found themselves in direct feudal relationship with the Crown—a peculiar position, which presented serious problems at the time of the transfer of power in 1947.

II

AFGHANISTAN AND THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER

Afghanistan was a recurrent fever in the history of British India. Its strategic position was grossly exaggerated, and the very mention of its name seemed to drive usually normal administrators and viceroys into the thicket of madness.

In 1838, as we have seen, policy had resulted in the fruitless campaigns of the First Afghan War and, indirectly, in the Mutiny of 1857. But their lessons had never been learned—not even the strictly military ones. Fear of

Russian designs against India drove out reason, even the reason of the map-maker.

Writing in 1934, two historians of British India (Thompson and Garratt) were able to say that 'the modern Englishman may find it difficult to understand the Russophobia which periodically attacked his countrymen. The modern Indian is inclined to doubt its reality.' We need have no such inhibitions today, for we are going through a period that has intense similarities with the nineteenth century. But these similarities are essentially psychological—the political context is not so easily reconciled.

On the establishment of rule by the Crown in 1858, the government of India ceased to be parochial. There had been a groping towards an imperial policy centred on India even when the East India Company still ruled the sub-continent. But the expanding frontiers of British India were, in those earlier days, strategic frontiers, intended not so much to keep out other powers as to weld into a unit an area of peace and administrative security. Some sort of frontier policy had, however, evolved. During the Mutiny, friendship with the Amir of Afghanistan (the same one as had been deposed by the British in the course of the First Afghan War) had been one of the cornerstones of security in the Punjab. After the Crown assumed the government of India, ideas about the frontiers proliferated.

The Crimean War ended any possibility of agreement between Britain and Russia on the subject of Central Asia. The Russian Empire was expanding in this political vacuum for almost the same reasons as the Indian Empire had reached the North-west Frontier. Now, the chances of a clash between the two empires in the wastes of Afghanistan began to have substance, and policy motivation changed from a simple concern for internal security to the wider field of European rivalries. The frontiers of India were no longer in Asia but in Westminster.

The problems of the North-west Frontier were not confined, however, to its relevance to British imperial policy. There was also the strictly local question of the trans-frontier tribes. Both were inextricably bound with each other. Attitudes and policies suitable for one were inflicted on the other. General principles were evolved with great seriousness (reflected in their consequences) out of a purely border policy. Administrative measures were vitiated by confused imperial thinking.

Under the Sikhs, administration of the Pathans and Baluchs who occupied the fantastic muddle of hills and valleys between the Indus and Afghanistan was virtually non-existent, and the area was in a perpetual state of semi-guerrilla warfare. When the British came to administer the frontier areas, the need for controlling the tribes was enhanced—or perhaps one should say, burdened—by that chronic preoccupation of the Victorian Empire-builder,

the duty to 'civilize'. The fact that the tribes were, at least nominally, subjects of the Amir of Afghanistan, lent colour to the views of the 'forward' school favouring intervention in Afghanistan. Those subscribing to the doctrines of this school dreamed of a 'scientific' frontier, well inside Afghan territory, which would enclose refractory tribes within the confines of the Indian Empire. Another consensus of opinion was that the barren, rocky wastes of Afghanistan and a turbulent zone of independent tribesmen were the best defence against an expanding Russia. Strategically, the latter were probably right, but they overlooked the fact that an Empire in which an alien minority rules autocratically cannot tolerate anarchy on its frontiers; for chaos is no respecter of boundaries and cannot be held at a customs-post.

Initially, the old Sikh frontier was maintained and trans-frontier trade encouraged. John Lawrence, fresh from the lessons of the Mutiny, sought to consolidate India. His policy was of peaceful progress at home and non-interference in the internal affairs of India's neighbours. He conceived that his duty in India was to centralize and unify, and that these responsibilities were the sum total of British aims and endeavours. He saw the Afghan problem as a will-o'-the-wisp leading to dangerous swamps, and did not see why, as his biographer puts it, he should 'make the imperial policy of India depend upon the flight of a random bullet or the dagger of a paradise-seeking Ghazi'. Or why he should 'employ our Indian army on a service which they hate, and so increase the difficulties of the recruiting officer, which are already formidable enough'; or why he should be expected 'to throw away crores of rupees on barren mountain ridges and ever-vanishing frontier lines, while every rupee is sorely needed by a government which can hardly pay its way, and by a vast population which, living on little more than starvation-rates, cries aloud to be saved from the tax-gatherer on the one hand and from actual starvation on the other'.

Lawrence's conception of a 'close border' was typical of the man. He was an administrator, not a dreamer; phlegmatic rather than visionary. He took his views of strict neutrality, as he did most things, to their logical conclusion. He would support any faction in Afghanistan that appeared stable but would help no-one to achieve the throne. In a letter to Afzul Khan, one of the many rivals for power in Afghanistan, Lawrence blandly wrote:

'My friend, the relations of this government are with the actual rulers of Afghanistan. If your Highness is able to consolidate your Highness' power, and is sincerely desirous of being the friend and ally of the British government, I shall be ready to accept your Highness as such. . . .'

No attempt at a settled administration of the frontier tribes was made. It would have been too expensive for Sir John Lawrence, who practically

lived within the bars of the Indian Budget. Instead, refractory tribes were subjected to punitive expeditions, the so-called 'butcher and bolt' tactics which, by destroying the tribes' crops, added to their incentive for plunder and unrest.

But the end of non-intervention was at hand. Superficially, it might seem that such a policy had been based upon ordinary common sense and the memory of 1838, or perhaps even on moral grounds, but this was not in fact the case. Lawrence never forgot the lesson of the Mutiny: that the British government in India was maintained by a combination of power and consent, and that a wave of popular feeling and hatred—properly led, and supported from outside—could drive the British into the sea. The aim of Lawrence, an aim to which all imperial policy must be subordinate, was simply to prevent the possibility of another and perhaps successful Mutiny. This was given explicit expression in his covering dispatch to Minutes in reply to Sir Henry Rawlinson's Memorandum proposing measures 'to counteract the advance of Russia in Central Asia, and to strengthen the influence and power of England in Afghanistan and Persia'. Lawrence wrote:

'Should a foreign power, such as Russia, ever seriously think of invading India from without, or, *what is more probable*, of stirring up the elements of disaffection or anarchy within it, our true policy, our strongest security, would be found to lie in previous abstinence from entanglements at either Kabul, Kandahar, or any similar outpost . . . in the contentment, if not in the attachment of the masses; in the sense of security of title and possession . . . in the construction of material works within British India, which enhance the comfort of the people while they add to our political and military strength . . . coupled with the avoidance of all sources of complaint, which either invite foreign aggression, or stir up restless spirits to domestic revolt.'

This was one of the last State Papers of Sir John Lawrence's administration. In 1869, he was replaced by Lord Mayo. Non-intervention continued until, during the administration of Lord Northbrook (1872-6), a Conservative government took office in England. In 1874, Disraeli, still flamboyant in manner, brought to English politics a brilliant but irrelevant sense of colour. Pro-Turkish and anti-Russian, like a great actor he seemed to dominate the stage with the most expansive and romantic gestures. He was fascinated by the fireworks of diplomacy, the rattling of sabres, and the chartering of special trains. Instead of putting diplomatic pressure on St Petersburg, Disraeli chose to make a show of force in Afghanistan. The 'forward' policy (and its supporters) was to have a chance. Northbrook was instructed to suggest to the Amir that a British Resident should be stationed

in Kabul. The viceroy protested and later resigned, maintaining with prophetic insight that the forcing of a Resident against the will of the Amir would, in all probability, 'subject us to the risk of another unnecessary and costly war in Afghanistan before many years are over'.

To succeed him came Lord Lytton, armed with instructions for 'a more definite, equilateral, and practical alliance' with Afghanistan, and blinded with imperial illusions. His political concepts emerged from a poet's world; he was seduced by the grandeur of an imperial mission, but he set out to give his illusions reality with the most rational single-mindedness. As a preparation for the war which would inevitably come, Quetta was occupied in 1876.

In 1878, tension between England and Russia was increased by the former's refusal to accept the Treaty of San Stefano between Russia and Turkey. In order to threaten Russia in Europe, Disraeli occupied Cyprus and rushed Indian troops to Malta. The obvious Russian reply was to rumble in the vastnesses of Central Asia and perhaps force the government of India to the logical conclusion of its frontier tactics—an expedition against Afghanistan.

On 13 June, a Russian agent left for Kabul and there attempted to involve the ruler, Sher Ali in a treaty very little different from that suggested by Lord Lytton. But on 13 July, a treaty was signed in Berlin which settled the Russo-Turkish question for the time being, and Stolietoff, the Russian agent, was recalled from Kabul.

At this stage, Disraeli, realizing the strong position the British government was now in, was ready to open negotiations with St Petersburg. But Lytton and Lord Cranbrooke, then Secretary of State for India, were of a different mind. Lytton saw the apparent withdrawal of Russia as the last chance to prove the ideas of the 'forward' school, and the first step on the road to fulfilment of his imperial conceptions. The *casus belli* was carefully manufactured. The courteous refusal of an Afghan frontier official, to allow a mission under Neville Chamberlain to proceed to Kabul, was elevated by Lytton into 'forcible repulse'. The Cabinet in England was bullied by Lord Cranbrooke into permitting the viceroy to demand an apology and the immediate reception of a mission. On 21 November 1878, three Indian armies crossed the Afghan frontier. On the 30th, a letter was received from the Amir accepting the mission. The letter was dated the 19th. This, however, made no difference to Lytton.

After a number of rather desultory engagements and the occupation of Kandahar and Jalalabad, Sher Ali fled to Russia, where he died in February 1879, and his son Yakub Khan signed the Treaty of Gandamak in May of the same year. The new Amir received various subsidies, and in return his foreign policy was to be controlled by the Indian government.

The Resident appointed to Kabul was one of the leading exponents of the 'forward' movement—Louis Cavagnari, who was described by a contemporary as 'a man of rash and restless disposition, and overbearing temper, consumed by' a 'thirst for personal distinction'. In fact, just the man to precipitate a repetition of the murder of Alexander Burnes in the Kabul Residency in 1841. Cavagnari, his staff and escort, were massacred on 3 September 1879 for the simple reason, as Abdur Rahman wrote in his autobiography, that 'the British Envoy looked upon himself as Ruler of Afghanistan, and dictated to Yakub what he should do. This boasting was disliked by the Afghan people, and they attacked him.'

Retributive vengeance was again the rallying-cry. Barbarities were commonplace. General Roberts, taking to heart the government's order that 'punishment should be swift, stern, and impressive' permitted indiscriminate hangings and the burning of villages. An administrative scandal came to light in India with the breakdown of the military accounts department—Indian agriculture had been seriously damaged by the requisition of draught animals by the army. The vast structure of threats and deceit crumbled about the viceroy. The government in England fell, and Lord Lytton resigned.

The new Liberal administration appointed Lord Ripon as viceroy, and Abdur Rahman, long a pensioner of the Russian government, succeeded to the throne of Afghanistan.

The 'forward' policy was totally discredited. It had been destroyed by the 'imperial' rashness of its supporters, and by their unwillingness to learn the lessons of the First Afghan War. It was, however, to have one further expression in the Younghusband expedition to Lhasa in 1903-04, the last Imperial involvement in Central Asia.

The effect of the Second Afghan War on frontier policy was negligible, but the frontier itself became the axis on which the administration of India revolved. Local problems had a decisive effect on the Indian Budget. Frontier instability, besides supplying a romantic background for novels, and later, films, was used as an excuse for tightening the security of the rest of India. A large contingent of British troops was kept in the country on the specious excuse of the 'defence of the North-west Frontier'—not, of course, because of the possibility of rebellion. India must appear calm, the Indian Empire like a monolith, for, though Lytton had failed in his imperial design in Central Asia, India was becoming the centre of a vast imperial order stretching from the Mediterranean to the Pacific.

III

THE ANNEXATION OF UPPER BURMA

In 1876, a question of court etiquette at Ava, the capital of the kingdom of Burma, led to the exclusion of the British Resident, who had been forced on the Burmese by the Second Burmese War of 1852, from any influence at court. The death of Mindon, who had ruled since 1853, led to a dispute in the succession and Thibaw, who was placed on the throne as the pliant tool of a ministerial party in 1879, massacred eighty members of the royal family. The situation now began to resemble that in Afghanistan, with the French in place of the Russians. In 1879, the British Resident was withdrawn. Six years later an enormous fine was imposed on the Bombay-Burmah Trading Corporation who had refused a loan to Thibaw. A French envoy was endeavouring to obtain the management of State monopolies and the right to construct a railway.

A British ultimatum (1885) was ignored and war was declared. Thibaw surrendered within two weeks and the country was annexed. The next four years (until 1890) were occupied with the pacification of the country, as most of Thibaw's army had fled to the jungles and carried on a guerilla war.

The Indian system of administration was applied to the country and Burma was treated as a province of the Indian Empire. Trade was expanded and, to the dissatisfaction of the people, cheap labour was brought from India. The result was antagonism not only to the British, but to Indian competition in the economic life of the country.

IV

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

The Act of 1858 saw the setting up of a Council of India, which included members with Indian experience, to advise the Secretary of State, presumably because of the gross ignorance of English politicians about India. Politicians, however, seldom welcome expert advice and in 1869 the Council became merely consultative. At the same time, Parliament took little interest in Indian affairs after the Mutiny and, in practice, the Secretary of State wielded unlimited and virtually unquestioned power.

This authority really became effective with the construction of the Red Sea Telegraph in 1870, which brought direct communication between Whitehall and Calcutta. Before this the Indian authorities, and particularly

strong viceroys, had been able to present the home government with accomplished facts, but afterwards the government in India was merely the instrument of the Secretary of State.

In the government of India itself changes were reflected in the diffusion of responsibility through a Legislative Council, which in 1861 was enlarged by the addition of non-official members amongst whom were two ruling princes who could be considered either as quislings or puppets. Whatever one's opinion, the fact that the Council had virtually no legislative function or control over the executive is undeniable. It was the first of many quasi-democratic devices designed to give an appearance of control and responsibility to institutions of a parliamentary character. Nevertheless, the establishment of Legislative Councils supplied the framework for the demand for constitutional rights, and small concessions were made. In 1892, the principle of election was established, though only for special-interest groups such as Municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, and universities.

Councils were established in the provinces on the same basis, between 1861 and 1898.

The viceroy was assisted by an Executive Council which by 1885 had developed into a Cabinet of six British officials.

V

INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

The effect of the Mutiny on the British in India was profound. Fear made them more and more withdraw from social contact with Indians. The expansion of European society in the towns confined the official to his office, his home, and the Club. The civil service's sense of superiority withdrew its members into a special ark of its own, riding with aggressive impartiality and indifference on the troubled seas of India.

This emotional withdrawal was reinforced by a political philosophy which had emerged from the Utilitarian systems of James Mill and Jeremy Bentham. These two thinkers had immense effect on the concept of British rule and purpose in India. Their ideas had their last representative figure in Macaulay, but by the time of the establishment of the Indian Empire a genuine though arrogant Liberalism had become a cold and aloof authoritarianism.

The foundations of British rule were explicitly stated by Fitzjames Stephen in 1883, and though the bluntness of his phrasing might seem jingoistic, his view was the product of a carefully calculated political philosophy.

'It is essentially an absolute government, founded, not on consent, but on conquest. It does not represent the native principles of life or of government, and it can never do so until it represents heathenism and barbarism. It represents a belligerent civilization, and no anomaly can be more striking or so dangerous, as its administration by men, who being at the head of a government founded upon conquest, implying at every point the superiority of the conquering race, of their ideas, their institutions, their opinions, and their principles, and having no justification for its existence except that superiority, shrink from the open, uncompromising, straightforward assertion of it, seek to apologize for their own position, and refuse, from whatever cause, to uphold and support it.'

Stephen has been called by a modern English writer the political philosopher of the Indian civil service. With him, its members were able to see themselves as the instruments of a Divine Peace. Stephen even compared the 'pax Britannica to the universal peace announced at Christ's nativity'. Stephen is worth quoting at some length as his opinions represent the fundamentals of British rule in the period of imperialism.

'The British Power in India is like a vast bridge over which an enormous multitude of human beings are passing, and will (I trust) for ages to come continue to pass, from a dreary land, in which brute violence in its roughest form had worked its will for centuries—a land of cruel wars, ghastly superstitions, wasting plague, and famine—on their way to a country of which, not being a prophet, I will not try to draw a picture, but which is at least orderly, peaceful, and industrious, and which, for aught we know to the contrary, may be the cradle of changes comparable to those which have formed the imperishable legacy to mankind of the Roman Empire. The bridge was not built without desperate struggles and costly sacrifices. A mere handful of our countrymen guard the entrance to it and keep order among the crowd. If it should fall, woe to those who guard it, woe to those who are on it, woe to those who would lose with it all hopes of access to a better land. Strike away either of its piers and it will fall, and what are they? One of its piers is military power: the other is justice; by which I mean a firm and constant determination on the part of the English to promote impartially and by all lawful means, what they (the English) regard as the lasting good of the natives of India. Neither force nor justice will suffice by itself. Force without justice is the old scourge of India, wielded by a stronger hand than of old. Justice without force is a weak aspiration after an unattainable end. But so long as the masterful will, the stout heart, the active brain, the

calm nerves, and the strong body which make up military force are directed to the object which I have defined as constituting justice, I should have no fear, for even if we fail after doing our best, we fail with honour, and if we succeed we shall have performed the greatest feat of strength, skill and courage in the whole history of the world. For of my own part, I see no reason why we should fail.'

Fitzjames Stephen and John Strachey are the ideologues of British India. Its poet was Kipling.

'Take up the White Man's burden—
And reap his old reward:
The blame of those ye better,
The hate of those ye guard—
The cry of hosts ye humour
(Ah, slowly!) towards the light—
"Why brought ye us from bondage,
Our loved Egyptian night?"'

These ideas and their practice were, of course, on the highest levels of administration. Apparent concessions were made in the interests of 'good government' to Municipalities and District Boards, but an analysis of these would be tedious for they represent the *mechanics* of efficient administration and have been amply discussed in more specialized works. In the broad sweep of the movement of history with which we are concerned, they are no more relevant than the horse-power of a car to its victim in a street accident.

VI

THE TWILIGHT OF THE IMPERIAL IDEA

The ideas that have been briefly touched upon in the preceding sections found their final expression in the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon (1899-1905). On his arrival, he found the government of India enmeshed in the web of routine. He sought to bring back to it 'the vitality of an unexhausted purpose'.

Curzon was the last great viceroy to impose his views directly upon India. His was a personal rule and little of what he did survived him. But in one role he will always be remembered, for he passed an Ancient Monuments Preservation Act and appointed a Director-General of Archaeology, therefore ensuring the perpetuation of India's past.

Curzon underestimated the growing power of nationalist sentiment. 'My own belief,' he wrote to the Secretary of State in 1900, 'is that Congress is tottering to its fall, and one of my great ambitions while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise.'

Many reforms in the administration were undertaken by Curzon and some are noted at the end of this Part. His most significant political act was the partition of Bengal into what were basically religious divisions: Western Bengal with its predominantly Hindu population, and Eastern Bengal with its capital at Dacca, a chiefly Muslim area. This foretaste of the partition of 1947 led to violence and the ultimate exacerbation of communal tensions, and supplied an immediate rallying-point for nationalist sentiment. The result was a policy of repression which only loosed further violence.

The failure of force now led to the slow abandonment of authoritarian rule, and we now come to the proud period of constitutional reforms, a better name for which might be the Age of Concessions, for it was a time of demand by nationalist elements for at least some of the instruments of self-rule—when the imperial government was forced, by opinion in England as well as in India, to make small but steady grants of power to Indian leaders.

*Some Further Opinions by Fitzjames Stephen and others
upon the Nature of Imperial Rule in the
Second Half of the Nineteenth Century*

'... In the first place there is hardly any nonsense at all in the system. It is a system carefully and laboriously constructed; superintended with extraordinary watchfulness and care, and worked by men who are paid for it and give their whole attention to it. It is not a heap of institutions, resting upon no principle, formed upon no system, and incapable of being understood except by a long course of historical study. . . . Whatever may have been the defects of Indian government, want of interest in the work done, want of vigilance in superintending the manner in which it is done, want of energy and enterprise in improving the manner of doing it, are not amongst them.'

J. Fitzjames Stephen, *Minute on the Administration of Justice*, 1872.
(Leslie Stephen: *Life of Sir J. F. Stephen*, 1895. pp. 106-7.)

'The fact that the institutions of a village community throw light on the institutions of modern Europe, and the fact that village communities have altered but little for many centuries, prove only that society in India has remained for a great number of centuries in a stagnant condition, unfavourable to the growth of wealth, intelligence, political experience, and the moral and intellectual changes which are applied in these processes. The condition of India for centuries past shows what the village communities are really

worth. Nothing that deserves the name of a political institution at all can be ruder or less satisfactory in its results. They are, in fact, a crude form of socialism, paralysing the growth of individual energy and all its consequences. The continuation of such a state of society is radically inconsistent with the fundamental principles of our rule both in theory and in practice.'

J. Fitzjames Stephen. (Hunter: *Life of Mayo*, 1875. Vol. II, pp. 165-6.)

'When we say that we cannot always, in our government of India, ignore differences of race, this is only another way of saying that the English in India are a handful of foreigners governing 250 millions of people . . . although I suppose that no foreign government was ever accepted with less repugnance than that with which the British government is accepted in India, the fact remains that there never was a country, and never will be, in which the government of foreigners is really popular. It will be the beginning of the end of our empire when we forget this elementary fact, and entrust the greater executive powers to the hands of Natives, on the assumption that they will always be faithful and strong supporters of our government. In this there is nothing offensive or disparaging to the Natives of India. It simply means that we are foreigners, and that, not only in our own interests, but because it is our highest duty towards India itself, we intend to maintain our dominion. We cannot foresee the time in which the cessation of our rule would not be the signal for universal anarchy and ruin, and it is clear that the only hope for India is the long continuance of the benevolent but strong government of Englishmen. Let us give to the Natives the largest possible share in the administration. . . . But let there be no hypocrisy about our intention to keep in the hands of our own people those executive posts—and there are not very many of them—on which, and on our political and military power, our actual hold of the country depends. Our Governors of provinces, the chief officers of our army, our magistrates of districts and their principal executive subordinates ought to be Englishmen under all circumstances that we can now foresee.'

Sir John Strachey: *India*, 1888. pp. 359-60.

'If it be asked how the system works in practice, I can only say that it enables a handful of unsympathetic foreigners (I am far from thinking that if they were more sympathetic they would be more efficient) to rule justly and firmly about 200,000,000 persons of many races, languages, and creeds, and in many parts of the country, bold, sturdy, and warlike. In one of his many curious conversations with native scholars Mr Monier Williams was addressed by one of them as follows: "The sahibs do not understand us or like us, but they try to be just, and they do not fear the face of man." I believe this to be strictly true. The Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, and the institutions which they regulate, are somewhat grim presents for one people to make to another, and are little calculated to excite affection; but they are eminently well-calculated to

protect peaceable men and to beat down wrongdoers, to exhort respect, and to enforce obedience.'

J. Fitzjames Stephen: *History of the Criminal Law of England*, 1883. Vol. III, pp. 344-5.

'I am convinced that the fundamental mistake of able and experienced Indian officials is a belief that we can hold India securely by what they call good government; that is to say, by improving the condition of the *ryot*, strictly administering justice, spending immense sums on irrigation works, etc. Politically speaking, the Indian peasantry is an inert mass. If it ever moves at all, it will move in obedience, not to its British benefactors, but to its native chiefs and princes, however tyrannical they may be. The only political representatives of native opinion are the Baboos, whom we have educated to write semi-seditious articles in the native Press, and who really represent nothing but the social anomaly of their own position. . . . To secure completely, and efficiently utilize, the Indian aristocracy is, I am convinced, the most important problem now before us.'

Lord Lytton to Lord Salisbury, 11 May 1877.

(Lady Betty Balfour: *The History of Lord Lytton's Indian Administration*, 1899. p. 109.)

' . . . the establishment of a system of law which regulates the most important part of the daily life of the people constitutes in itself a moral conquest more striking, more durable, and far more solid, than the physical conquest which rendered it possible. It exercises an influence over the minds of the people in many ways comparable to that of a new religion. . . . Our law is in fact the sum and substance of what we have to teach them. It is, so to speak, the gospel of the English, and it is a compulsory gospel which admits of no dissent and no disobedience.'

J. Fitzjames Stephen. (Hunter: *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 169.)

'The substance of all that I have to say is this—The English in India have been by circumstances committed to an enterprise which is in reality difficult and dangerous to the last degree, though its difficulties and dangers have thus far been concealed by the conspicuous success which has attended their efforts. That enterprise is nothing less than the management and guidance of the most extensive and far-reaching revolution recorded in history. It involves the radical change of the ideas and institutions of a vast population which has already got ideas and institutions to which it is deeply attached. The only method of conducting this revolution to a good end is by unity of action and policy, communicated from a central authority to a small number of picked local officers, the central and local authorities being supported by a military force sufficient to give them practically undisputed executive power, and the whole body being regulated by known laws impartially administered. By these means the tremendous change now in progress may be carried out in a quiet, orderly and gradual way, with what specific results no one can tell, but it may be hoped with good ones, unless the ideas on which all our

European civilization is based are essentially wrong. If, however, the authority of the Government is once materially relaxed, if the essential character of the enterprise is misunderstood and the delusion that it can be carried out by assemblies representing the opinions of the natives is admitted, nothing but failure, anarchy, and ruin can be the result.'

J. Fitzjames Stephen, 'Foundations of the Government of India' (*Nineteenth Century*, No. LXXX, October 1883, p. 566).

'All that the law can do or ought to try to do is to provide a rational and convenient framework in which the new state of things may grow up; but what the new state of things will ultimately be like, it passes the wit of man to say. The utmost, I think, that European experience justifies us in asserting, is, that the maintenance of peace and order and the supremacy of regular law—of a law that is founded on considerations of temporal expediency, and leaving religious and all other speculations to find their own level—is an indispensable condition of the only kind of benefits which it is in our power to confer upon India.'

J. Fitzjames Stephen. (Hunter: *op.cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 175-6.)

'... I deny that ambition and conquest are crimes; I say that ambition is the great incentive to every manly virtue, and that conquest is the process by which every great State in the world (the United States not excepted) has been built up. North America would be a hunting-ground for savages if the Puritans had not carried guns as well as Bibles, and the United States would be a memory of the past if the North, 13 years ago, had not conquered the South. I for one, feel no shame when I think of the great competitive examination which lasted for just 100 years, and of which the first paper was set upon the field of Plassey, and the last (for the present) under the walls of Delhi and Lucknow. ...'

Letter of J. Fitzjames Stephen to *The Times*, 4 January 1878.

The Age of Concessions 1909-37

IN 1908, ON THE OCCASION of the fiftieth anniversary of the assumption of power by the Crown, King Edward VII was graciously pleased to announce a new deal for India, and did so with no sense of irony though with considerable understatement.

‘The proclamation of the supremacy of the Crown sealed the unity of Indian government and opened a new era. The journey was arduous and the advance may have sometimes seemed slow; but the incorporation of many strangely diversified communities, and some three hundred millions of the human race under British guidance and control, proceeded steadfastly and with purpose. . . . From the first, the principle of representative institutions began to be gradually introduced and the time has come when, in the judgment of my Viceroy and Governor-General and others of my counsellors, the principle may be prudently extended.’

The result was the Indian Councils Act of 1909, popularly called after its authors the Morley-Minto Reforms. Briefly, its provision extended the membership of the Central Legislative Council from sixteen to sixty, twenty-seven of whom were to be elected mainly by special-interest groups. The most important change was the recognition of Muslims as the most important of these groups, and the dangerous principle of communal representation was incorporated into the Act.

The Council consisted of three groups: elected members, officials, and non-officials nominated from such organizations as trade associations, landholders, and universities. In the Provincial Legislatures, non-officials outnumbered the officials but in the Central Council there was an official majority. The Councils, however, could dispense only criticism and advice—a parliament, in fact, without the ministerial responsibility which is the essence of the parliamentary system. Such a thing as the introduction of actual power to the Councils was, of course, never envisaged. Morley himself confirmed this in the House of Commons in 1908. ‘If it could be said that this chapter of reform led directly or indirectly to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India, I, for one, would have nothing at all to do with it.’

The reforms were not, however, absolutely pointless, for they encouraged

the demand for really representative institutions and at the same time supplied the framework in which the knowledge and use of democratic institutions could progress.

During the First World War, agitation for constitutional reform continued and in 1917 an announcement was made that:

'The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire.'

The consequence was the Government of India Act of 1919, again popularly known after the Secretary of State and the viceroy of the time, as the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. The Act, which came into force in 1921, was a major step forward in the technique of responsible government but not in its practice, for though in theory the powers of the new legislature were extensive, the Governor-General was the real authority; for he could 'certify' measures rejected by the Legislative and if necessary rule by ordinance without reference to anyone else. A wide range of debate was therefore encouraged but only listened to if it suited the executive. The Central Legislative was also weakened by the introduction of what later became known as 'dyarchy' in the provinces. By this was meant the division of the departments of administration into 'reserved' and 'transferred' sections. Generally speaking, law and order, revenue and finance, were reserved, i.e. administered by the Governor, while local government, sanitation, education, and economic development were transferred to Ministers. This hybrid arrangement could only work with the maximum co-operation of both sides and consequently had little chance of success.

Again, the concession of the forms of government without its responsibility led to demands for further reforms.

Once again, Afghanistan forces its way into the history of India. In 1919, the Amir was assassinated. His son Amanullah, taking advantage of unrest in the Punjab, attempted to invade the North-west Frontier Province by raising the tribes. The campaign lasted only a few weeks but the government of India at last abandoned its claim to control Afghan foreign policy. The frontier was the scene of disturbances, and roads were built to facilitate the movement of troops. After this, comparative peace reigned in the tribal areas.

India now began to take a place in the international scene. Indian representatives appeared at the League of Nations and at many international conferences. A valuable experience for the future.

One of the provisions of the 1919 Act was the appointment of a Royal Commission after ten years to examine the results of the reforms. In 1927 a Conservative government in Britain decided to appoint a Commission consisting entirely of British Members of Parliament under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon. The Commission visited India in the following year but was boycotted by nationalist leaders. Its report was issued in 1930.

In the meanwhile, a Labour government had taken office in 1929 and the viceroy, who had been recalled, on his return to India announced:

'In view of the doubts which have been expressed both in Great Britain and India regarding the interpretation to be placed on the intentions of the British Government in enacting the statute of 1919, I am authorized on behalf of His Majesty's Government to state clearly that, in their judgment, it is implicit in the Declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress as there contemplated is the attainment of Dominion status.'

Furthermore, he announced that a conference representing all sections of India, including the princes, would meet in London after the report of the Simon Commission had been examined.

The conference, called the Round Table Conference, duly met, but without any representation of nationalist elements (see p. 328 ff.)—who refused to attend and started a civil disobedience campaign which placed most of India's important leaders in British prisons.

The recommendations of the Simon Commission were, briefly, that full responsible government, except for the Governor's special powers to maintain security, was to be given to the Provinces. A wider franchise was to be introduced and the official bloc abolished. The central executive was, however, to remain unchanged.

The second session of the Conference met in 1931 and Mr Gandhi attended as the representative of Congress. At the first session, the princes had supported a claim for Dominion status, and pledged their willingness to join an all-India federation. It had also been suggested that dyarchy should apply to the central government, and the British Prime Minister announced his government's acceptance of 'proposals for a full responsible government in the Provinces and for responsible government with some features of dualism at a federalized centre'. At the second session, dyarchy was rejected by Mr Gandhi, and he failed to produce agreement on the question of communal electorates.

In India, civil disobedience broke out again, and Mr Gandhi on his return from London was detained in prison. The third session of the Conference therefore took place without nationalist representation. Before its meeting,

the British government announced a scheme known as the 'Communal Award'. By this, separate representation was ensured for all minority communities. The 'depressed classes'—a splendid euphemism for the outcaste population, who later became known as 'scheduled castes'—were recognized as a minority and given separate representation. This was particularly offensive to Mr Gandhi who started a fast against it, as he believed this granting of minority rights to the scheduled castes divorced them from the body of Hindu voters.

The third Conference, which met in 1932, was mainly concerned with methods of election. The results of the three meetings were embodied in a White Paper. From discussions in the Houses of Parliament emerged the Government of India Act of 1935, which came into effect in 1937.

The provisions of the new Act were as follows:

- (i) The Provinces, now numbering eleven, were to be given full responsible government, subject to certain reserve powers in the hands of the Governors, only to be used in the event of the complete breakdown of law and order. (ii) At the Centre, a Federation of India was to be set up. The Central Legislature was to consist of two Houses, comprising, for the first time, representatives not only of the Provinces but of the Indian States. The Executive Council was to consist of Ministers responsible to the Central Legislature, with the exception of the portfolios of Foreign Affairs and Defence, which were to remain in the hands of the Viceroy, who also held certain safeguards, like the Provincial Governors, to be used in the case of emergency. As to Dominion status, it was officially stated that the clauses of the Act which precluded full self-government were merely transitional, and India, by usage and convention, would quickly acquire all the freedom, external and internal, enjoyed by the Dominions.

That part of the Act concerning a Federation never came into force as the princes could not agree to the lessening of their sovereignty. If they had done, the structure of independent India might have been different. Federation was also denounced by the Congress and the Muslim League. Thus the Centre remained as it had been, with the executive responsible only to the Secretary of State and the British Parliament.

This was the last of the constitutional reforms of the British in India. Indian opinion had amply justified the prophecy of Macaulay which we have already quoted. They had 'demanded European institutions' and had received the scaffolding of them. The next stage was to erect the building in independence and freedom.

Industry and Agriculture

I

THE RISE OF INDIAN INDUSTRY

THE EFFECTS OF THE Industrial Revolution, as we have seen, were disastrous to the pre-capitalist manufacturing techniques of the Indians. Indian markets were flooded with cheap, machine-made goods which in their turn affected the tastes of the Indians.

Gradually, in reaction, indigenous manufactures were organized on modern lines. This was particularly effective in the seventies of the last century.

The government's attitude to industrial development was luke-warm. Large-scale enterprises, textile factories, tea plantations, and coalmines were generally European-controlled. The government itself engaged in semi-commercial enterprises—forests and railways, for example. When cotton exports became too high, Lancashire manufacturers forced the exemption of their own products from Indian import duties. This policy was, however, later abandoned.

The policy of indifference to industrial progress was changed by the establishment of a separate Department of Commerce and Industry by Curzon in 1905. The Swadeshi ('indigenous manufactures') movement also gave a boost to the industrial life of India.

The First World War led to the active encouragement of industry, and the abolition of cotton excise in 1925 was the effective end of economic dependence by tariff discrimination. A new Tariff Board, by safeguarding industry and fostering new developments, helped Indian-owned industrial undertakings to expand enormously and India became sixth in the order of the world's industrial nations.

The last pre-capitalist gesture was to be made by Mahatma Gandhi in his establishment of the All-India *Khaddar* ('homespun cloth') Association, and his attempt to convert members of the Congress to the spinning of nine yards of yarn a day.

THE CONDITION OF THE PEASANT

The simple result of the application of the English conception of property rights in land was the growth of a huge agricultural debt. The most significant individual in the village ceased to be the priest and became the money-lender, though the two allied themselves in the process of exploitation. The peasant 'had to think of wealth in terms of money instead of cattle or grain; money was a medium of which he knew little, which exposed him to the wiles of the shopkeeper and silversmith, the demands of the priests and the depredations of the robber'. The number of money-lenders and bankers (and their families) increased from 53,263 in 1868 to 193,890 in 1911. In 1880 the Famine Commission disclosed that 'one-third of the land-holding classes are deeply and inextricably in debt and that at least an equal proportion are in debt, though not beyond the power of recovering themselves'.

The money-lenders took advantage of the illiteracy of their clients. As early as 1879, an Englishman speaking in support of the Deccan Agriculturalists Relief Act could say that

'... the money-lenders do obtain bonds on false pretences; enter in them sums larger than agreed upon; deduct extortionate premiums; credit produce at fraudulent prices; retain liquidated bonds and sue on them; use threats and warrants of imprisonment to extort fresh bonds for sums not advanced; charge interest unstipulated for, over-calculated or in contravention of Hindu law, and commit a score of other rogueries—these are facts proved by evidence so overwhelming that I scarcely know what to quote out of the five volumes composing the Report of the Commission.'

This statement, with minor changes, could have been made at any time up to the end of British rule.

Various reforms took place in the government's attitude to agriculture. Curzon passed the Punjab Land Allocation Act in an attempt to save the peasants from the money-lenders, and also established Co-operative Credit Societies to lend money at low rates of interest. All attempts at 'rural reconstruction' were, however, too weak to have any great effect upon the misery of the peasants. Basically, they had only exchanged one oppression for another; the tax-collector for the depredations of priest and money-lender.

The Origins of the Freedom Movement

I

THE GREAT AWAKENING

FROM THE WORK OF EUROPEAN historians India recovered a sense of its past. The impact of the West had shattered the structure of society in no uncertain manner. But the civilization it shattered was a Muslim one, so it thus released the Hindu religion from persecution and demoralization. The boons of Western science and education did not have one of the effects that Macaulay had hoped for—that Hinduism would be destroyed, at least among the middle classes.

The Brahmo Samaj, which emerged out of the reformist activities of Ram Mohun Roy, came under the leadership of Keshab Chandra Sen who joined the movement in 1857. A break occurred over the progressive ideas of Keshab—which included inter-caste marriage and widow remarriage—so Keshab founded a new movement dedicated to social reform and contemptuous of the impedimenta of popular Hinduism. The results of the movement were considerable, and a great deal of legislation removing caste-restrictions was due to them. Because of their belief in the orderly change of Hindu social ideas, in politics Keshab's followers trod the path of constitutional reform and played little part in the national revolution.

Indian reaction to the Mutiny was to lead to a religious revival, and for some time this helped to promote a feeling of self-respect as well as supplying some sort of scaffolding for the building of the nationalist movement.

The Arya Samaj was founded in Bombay in 1875 by Swami Dayananda Saraswati (1824–83). His doctrine was that the true religion of India had its only source in the *Vedas*. He maintained that everything worth knowing, even in the most recent inventions of modern science, was alluded to in the *Vedas*. Steam-engines, railways, and steam-boats were all shown to have been foreseen by the poets of the *Vedas*. At the same time, he also attacked caste-restrictions, child marriage, and other features of popular Hinduism. The appeal to the masses was immense, for Dayananda did not confine his teaching to the intellectuals. In its beginning, the Arya Samaj was more religious than political, but later, on the establishment of the *Suddhi* movement for

the conversion of non-Hindus, the political concept of a united India appears. Dayananda also founded the Cow Protection Association (1882) which can be seen as an overt anti-Muslim gesture.

The revival of Hinduism was to come not from the particularism of the Arya Samaj but from the general body of Hindu tradition. This was to have its crystallization in the Ramakrishna Mission, the last great social and religious movement of the nineteenth century. Its prophet was a young Bengali graduate, Narendranath Dutta (1863-1902), who took the name of Vivekananda. The Mission he founded after the death of the mystic Ramakrishna Paramahansa, whose disciple he had been, stood for religious and social reform deriving its inspiration from India's traditions and past history. In his travels abroad, Vivekananda always proclaimed the superiority of Hindu civilization and the greatness of India's past. This gave to Indians a new sense of pride and, when coupled with Vivekananda's passionate belief in India's future, helped enormously in giving the people of India a faith in their nationhood.

These movements gave the educated middle class a new feeling of identity with the mass of India. The physical unity which the British had given to the country through a central government, but above all through the expansion of communications, was now reinforced by the knowledge of a common heritage.

At the same time, the turning away from half-baked Europeanization led to a revival of vernacular literature and the expansion of the Press in the Indian languages.

II

THE ORGANIZATION OF NATIONALIST SENTIMENT

Under the British, a new professional class had grown up in India. By learning English, it found that it had acquired a common language with members of its class throughout the country. It had, through a semi-English education, absorbed certain political views, particularly about democracy and responsible government. This professional class was treated with the same indifference as other Indians and its members, despite their education and knowledge of English, found themselves often without employment or, if they were in government service or foreign-owned commercial undertakings, barred from progress to the higher appointments. The Indian mill-owner and business-man looked to the professional classes for support in their demands for fiscal changes. To this body of discontent can also be added the older orthodox Hindus who had no reason to love the British.

The first concrete demand was naturally for a share in the cake, and educated Indians realized that the first step must be admittance to the higher ranks of the civil service. Pledges had often been given that no Indian 'shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them be disabled from holding any office or employment' (Charter Act, 1833), and it was not unnatural that resentment should grow when these promises were never carried out. This discontent was to move into active agitation with the case of Surendranath Banerjea who, though passing at a high level the competitive examination for the civil service, had to resort to the Queen's Bench in London in order to secure appointment—only to find himself soon dismissed for a minor offence, on the specious grounds of 'moral turpitude'. Banerjea founded, in 1876, the Indian Association of Calcutta which stood for a united India. Banerjea had considerable success throughout the country. 'For the first time under British rule, India with its varied races and religion, had been brought upon the same platform for a common and united purpose. Thus was it demonstrated by an object-lesson of impressive significance that whatever might be our differences in respect of race and language, or social and religious institutions, the people of India could combine and unite for the attainment of their common political ends.'

Nevertheless, the movement remained 'constitutional'. The success of organization, the effect of agitation against unpopular legislation, and the notorious English reaction against the Ilbert Bill—which sought to withdraw the privilege of European British subjects to be tried by judges of their own race—all demonstrated the advantages of organized opposition. The result was an Indian National Conference in Calcutta, in 1883.

In the same year, a retired English civil servant, A. O. Hume, had addressed an open letter to the graduates of Calcutta University, suggesting that they should organize themselves into an association for moral, social, and political revival. Official support was forthcoming, and the viceroy, Lord Dufferin, informed Hume 'that he found the greatest difficulty in ascertaining the real wishes of the people and that it would be a public benefit if there existed some responsible organization through which the government might be kept informed regarding the best Indian public opinion'. Hume's activities resulted in the first meeting of the Indian National Congress in Bombay in 1885, at the same time as the second session of the Indian National Conference was held in Calcutta. Later the two organizations merged.

Essentially, the Congress was a vehicle for moderate opinion and its 'constitutional agitation' brought some results. Congress was concerned with 'reforms' and not freedom, and placed special emphasis on the development

of self-government, the spread of education, the separation of judicial and executive functions, and the wider employment of Indians in the higher ranks of public service. Its members were Anglophile and 'loyal'. One member, Sir Phirozeshah Mehta, made what he called 'the confession of faith of a devout and irreclaimable Congressman' by saying:

'I am a robust optimist . . . I believe in divine guidance through human agency. . . . My steadfast loyalty [to the Crown] is founded upon this rock of hope and patience; seeking the Will of Providence, like Oliver Cromwell, in dispensations rather than revelations, seeing God's will like him in fulfilment of events. I accept British rule . . . as a dispensation so wonderful, a little island set at one end of the world establishing itself in a far continent as different as could be, that it would be folly not to accept it as a declaration of God's will.'

This moderation, however, did not ensure the continuance of official approval and Dufferin, on the eve of his departure, sneered at Congress as a 'microscopic minority' which had no claim to represent Indian opinion. At the Congress meeting of 1896, R. C. Mitra made the 'moderates' reply.

'The educated community represented the brain and the conscience of the country, and were the legitimate spokesmen of the illiterate masses, the natural custodians of their interests. To hold otherwise would be to presuppose that a foreign administrator in the service of the government knows more about the wants of the masses than their educated countrymen. It is true in all ages that those who think must govern those who toil; and could it be that the natural order of things was reversed in this unfortunate country?'

Congress, finding itself ignored by the government of India, turned to England and, by interesting Charles Bradlaugh, who with the aid of Indian leaders drafted a Bill for the reform of the Legislative Councils, was indirectly responsible for the Indian Councils Act of 1892—which the British government hurriedly produced as an alternative. Congress now began to find itself increasingly isolated between an indifferent government and a growing Indian nationalism.

The movement now began, under the influence of the Hindu revival, to take on the appearance of a strictly Hindu nationalism. This was particularly expressed in the work of B. G. Tilak. Tilak revived the spirit of the Marathas and, as an orthodox Hindu, conceived the idea of disguising a political movement behind a religious revival, knowing the unwillingness of the government to interfere in matters of religion. This he did by organizing

a cult of the elephant-headed god Ganesha, the remover of obstacles. Tilak saw, in this and in the festivals that were held, a method of bringing together both national sentiment and religious consciousness, and building a sense of social solidarity. Having established a way of reviving Hindu religious enthusiasm, Tilak now produced a secular hero in the founder of the Maratha Empire, Sivaji. He did not see this as an anti-Muslim gesture, though the European Press attempted to smear it as such. At a meeting in Calcutta in 1907, Tilak explained his reasons for choosing Sivaji.

‘Our political aspirations need all the strength which the worship of a *Swadeshi* [native] hero is likely to inspire in our minds. For this purpose, what greater hero than Sivaji could be found in Indian history. He was born at a time when the whole nation required relief from misrule; and by his self-sacrifice, courage, and heroic deeds he proved to the world that India was not a country forsaken by Providence. It is true that the Muhammadans and the Hindus were then divided; and Sivaji, who respected the religious scruples of the Muhammadans, had to fight against the Mughal rule that had become unbearable to the people.’

Tilak’s achievement was to give for the first time to the nationalist movement a much broader basis than neo-Western liberalism could ever supply: the identity of the *people* of India with the struggle for its freedom.

For various reasons, the Muslims now began to distrust the direction the nationalist movement was taking. The British attitude towards them, as the former ruling race in India, had always been different from that which was adopted towards Hindus, and a policy of discrimination against Muslims had been followed from as early as 1843 when Ellenborough wrote: ‘I cannot close my eyes to the belief that that race is fundamentally hostile to us, and our true policy is to reconcile the Hindus.’ This policy, reinforced by what was believed to be the attempt to revive Muslim rule in the Mutiny of 1857, was only abandoned in the face of a rising Hindu nationalism. The government began to favour the Muslims. The policy of ‘divide and rule’ now took on a more sinister appearance. Sir Syed Ahmad, a Muslim patriot and nationalist, was persuaded from his original belief, that Hindus and Muslims together made India a nation, to a fear that ‘the larger community [the Hindus] would fully override the interests of the smaller community’. This change of mind was the consequence of unremitting propaganda by a certain Mr Beck, Principal of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh from 1875 to 1899. Muslim leaders, encouraged by Beck’s successors, demanded communal representation, separate electorates and finally, Pakistan.

By 1905, the organization of the nationalist movement was divided between

the moderate elements—who looked to the orderly progress of constitutional reforms, despite the indifference of the government to its resolutions—and the radical 'extremist' section of whom Tilak was the representative figure. It was to be left to Curzon, who had hoped to help in the 'demise' of Congress, to give it a push on the road that was finally to lead to independence.

The Struggle for Freedom 1905-42

I

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE 'NEW NATIONALISM'

THE NEW SPIRIT of militant nationalism was considerably heartened by the first defeat suffered in the East by a modern European power—in Japan's great victory over Russia in 1904-5. Curzon's partition of Bengal for specious reasons of administrative efficiency (actually an attempt to divide the politically conscious Bengalis), provoked fierce resistance. G. K. Gokhale, the 'moderate' leader who presided over the Congress in 1905, summed up the situation.

'The tremendous upheaval of popular feeling which has taken place in Bengal in consequence of the Partition will constitute a landmark in the history of our national progress. . . . A wave of true national consciousness has swept over the province. . . . Bengal's heroic stand against the oppression of a harsh and uncontrolled bureaucracy has astonished and gratified all India, and her sufferings have not been endured in vain, when they have helped to draw closer all parts of the country in sympathy and aspiration.'

The government was openly defied and a boycott of British goods in favour of *Swadeshi* (the use of Indian-made goods) was proposed by the Congress in 1906, which for the first time expressed its goal as 'the system of government obtaining in the self-governing British colonies'. These measures represented the influence of 'extremist' leaders such as Tilak, Bepin Chandra Pal, and Lajpat Rai, and there was a split between them and the 'moderates' at the Congress session of 1907 at Surat. The division was to last for nine years.

The division of Bengal inspired Nawab Salimulla of Dacca to found, in 1906, the Muslim League, which supported the Partition and opposed the boycott. The government now began a campaign of repression. Peaceful pickets were beaten up and their leaders deported without trial. The campaign was unsuccessful in checking the nationalist movement and resulted in an underground conspiracy of terror against government officials. The 'anarchist movement' was suppressed with such ferocity that the Secretary of State (Lord Morley) wrote a private letter to the viceroy in 1908.

'I must confess to you that I am watching with the deepest concern and dismay the thundering sentences that are now being passed for sedition, etc. I read today that stone-throwers in Bombay are getting *twelve months*. This is really outrageous. The sentences on the two Tinnevely-Tuticorin men are wholly indefensible—one gets transportation for life, the other for ten years . . . They cannot stand. I cannot on any terms whatever consent to defend such monstrous things! I do therefore urgently solicit your attention to these wrongs and follies. We must keep order, but excess of severity is not the path to order. On the contrary, it is the path to the bomb.'

The failure of repression led to an attempt to win over the 'moderates' by the Morley-Minto Reforms (1909) and the revocation of the Partition of Bengal two years later. The provision in the new reforms for separate representation for Muslims drove the 'moderates' to reunion with the 'extremist' section at the Congress session at Lucknow in 1916.

The period from 1905-16 had seen the beginning of the new nationalism and set the pattern for the final struggle. It also showed the establishment of *two* nations to be the deliberate policy of the British. The device of the 'separate electorate', consciously used to encourage fissiparous tendencies in the nationalist movement, was so successful that at the meetings of both the Congress and the Muslim League held at Lucknow in 1916, the famous 'Lucknow Pact' was agreed, by which the Congress accepted the idea of separate representation of minorities ('communal representation').

II

THE GANDHIAN REVOLUTION

The First World War and the attack on Turkey by Great Britain produced strong anti-British feeling among Muslims and inspired the Lucknow Pact with the Congress in 1916. The war, and India's role in it, inspired the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. The Report of 1917 on which these were based was condemned by a special session of the Congress and the 'moderate' leaders, who wanted to accept them, broke away to found the Indian Liberal Federation.

Mahatma Gandhi, who had fought in South Africa for the equality of Indians, had returned to India in 1914 and thrown himself into the championship of the 'untouchable classes', the peasants, and the mill-hands. In 1919, General Dyer opened fire on an unarmed assembly in the Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar, killing and wounding a large number of people. This

act turned Gandhi into a revolutionary but one of a kind that never had been seen before. Under his inspiration, Congress adopted in 1920 the famous resolution on non-cooperation, and called for a boycott of the legislatures, law courts, schools, and for the giving-up of titles. The aim of the Indian National Congress was now proclaimed to be *Swaraj* (self-rule) by peaceful and legitimate means. The Mahatma gave to the nationalist movement a revolutionary impetus; above all, by its appeal to the masses Congress could claim with authority to speak for the people of India.

The defeat of Turkey and the destruction of the Turkish Empire led to the *Khilafat* (the Indian spelling of Caliphate) movement. This mass organization of Muslims gave a religious bent to their grievances. Though the Indian Muslims had never paid particular deference to the Caliph (the Sultan of Turkey) his deposition gave grounds for agitation. A campaign was organized in the north to move Muslims from India to Afghanistan, but no preparations had been made and great suffering resulted. The *Khilafat* movement combined with the Congress in its civil disobedience campaign, but violence broke out on the Malabar coast. A mixed Arab race known as Moplahs began a reign of terror over their Hindu neighbours. Communal tensions were further inflamed.

The 'non-cooperation' campaign resulted in abstention from voting for the new Councils—set up under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms—of nearly two-thirds of the eligible electorate. English cloth was burnt in public, and the jails were crowded with 30,000 political prisoners. Imprisonment became an honour. The Prince of Wales, brought out to rouse the enthusiasm of the masses for the Crown, was greeted by a *bartal* (suspension of business) which presented him with empty streets and no opportunities for expressions of public loyalty.

At the Congress session held at Ahmadabad in 1921, the Mahatma was given sole executive authority to lead the national movement. The expected mass demonstrations were called off after the destruction of a police station and the murder of twenty-two policemen at a town in the United Provinces. The resultant frustration and the failure of the *Swaraj* party, formed by C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru to contest the elections and to wreck reforms from within, revived Hindu-Muslim conflict. Communal riots, undoubtedly provoked by those wishing to divide the two communities, broke out in 1923, and the Muslim League was revived in the following year. Congress, obsessed with its desire for freedom, underestimated the strength of Muslim opinion and permitted the government to continue its attempts to divide the nationalist movement.

The boycott of the Simon Commission supplied an opportunity for alliance but its refusal to accept claims put forward for the Muslims by

Mr Jinnah at the All-Party Conference held in 1928, led to the holding of an All-India Muslim Conference and the formulation of claims which became famous as Mr Jinnah's 'fourteen points'.

Both the All-Party Conference and, later, the Congress, agreed to accept Dominion status by 31 December 1929 at latest, despite the latter's declaration of 1927 that its aim was complete independence.

The viceroy, Lord Irwin, announced in October 1929 that Dominion status was 'the natural issue of India's constitutional progress' and that a Round Table Conference of all parties would take place in London. The Congress, in a session at Lahore in December, again declared its aim as complete independence, and decided to boycott the Conference and start civil disobedience. At midnight on 31 December 1929, the Indian National Flag was hoisted by the President of the Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. On 26 January 1930, Independence Day was proclaimed; and the anniversary has been celebrated every year from that date.

The civil disobedience campaign was inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi on 6 April 1930, with his famous march to Dandi in western India, and his making of salt from sea-water as a protest against the government's salt-monopoly. Mass strikes, the boycott of British goods and, unfortunately, violence followed. The government reacted with vigour and 103 people were killed, 420 injured, and 60,000 imprisoned in less than a year. These measures, carried out with considerable brutality, were unsuccessful, and conciliation followed. The first session of the Round Table Conference was adjourned on 2 January 1931 and on 4 March, the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed. By this, the government abandoned its repressive measures and released political prisoners. The Congress called off its civil disobedience campaign and agreed to join the Conference when it reassembled.

Gandhi, who attended as the only representative of the Congress, could not agree on the communal problem; the result was the Communal Award which provided for separate representation for the 'depressed classes'. On his return to India, Gandhi found that the government had reverted to its policy of repression and, after the adoption by the Working Committee of the Congress on 1 January 1932 of a resolution to renew civil disobedience, he was arrested and the Congress declared illegal. More than 120,000 people were arrested by March 1933 and 'wholesale violence, physical outrages, punitive expeditions, collective fines on villages and seizure of lands and property' were recorded by a delegation of the India League in its report published in 1933.

Civil disobedience continued until May 1934, when Congress decided to work within the framework of the forthcoming Government of India Act of 1935. The elections of early 1937 saw Congress Ministries established in

seven out of eleven Provinces. The Muslim League wished to form coalition Ministries with the Congress, but this was refused and Mr Jinnah publicly stated that 'Muslims can expect neither justice nor fair play under a Congress government'. The Congress administrations were very successful and its prestige grew so that its membership by the end of 1939 was five million.

By this time, the Congress had again produced a militant wing headed by Subhas Chandra Bose, who defeated Gandhi's nominee for the Presidency of the Congress. Subhas Bose was forced to resign and founded a new party, the Forward Bloc.

On the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, the Congress refused 'co-operation in a war which is conducted on imperialist lines' and all the Congress ministers resigned in October and November 1939.

When German armies were apparently victorious in Europe, the Congress offered its co-operation if a Provisional National Government was established at the Centre. Britain refused this on 8 August 1940, but an offer was made (i) to set up after the war a body to prepare a new Constitution, (ii) to enlarge the Viceroy's Executive Council by more Indian members and (iii) to create a War Advisory Council of representatives of British India and the Princely States.

This was rejected as unrealistic and a new civil disobedience campaign on an individual basis was started.

The fall of Rangoon to the Japanese in March 1942 and the possibility of their imminent attack upon India resulted in the sending of a Cabinet Minister (Sir Stafford Cripps) to India; but all he did was to repeat the old offer.

In the meanwhile, the estrangement of the Muslim League from the Congress had become final. In 1940, Mr Jinnah had declared for a Muslim State of Pakistan. This now supplied the government with a splendid excuse for refusing once again to establish an Indian national government.

On 8 August 1942, the All-India Congress Committee called for a widespread return to civil disobedience. The government acted immediately by declaring that the Congress was illegal, and arrested its leaders. The consequence was riot and sabotage throughout India. Repression was again immediate and bloody. Over 60,000 people were arrested, 14,000 detained without trial, 940 killed, and 1,630 injured in clashes with police and military.

Subhas Chandra Bose escaped from India. When the Japanese reached the frontiers of India, an Indian National Army with Bose as its *Netaji* (leader) was amongst their forces. In 1943 a Government of Free India was established in Singapore. Bose was killed when a Japanese plane in which he was travelling crashed in 1945.

The End of the Empire

IN MAY 1944, MAHATMA GANDHI was released from detention on the grounds of his ill-health. His first act was to hold discussions with Mr Jinnah, but without result, as the Muslim League was now confidently looking forward to the State of Pakistan. In March 1945 the viceroy, Lord Wavell, returned from a visit to London with the proposal that all members of his Council except the Commander-in-Chief should be Indians drawn from the leaders of the political parties, with equality in Muslim and so-called caste-Hindu representation. A conference at Simla in June 1945 broke down because of disagreement between the Congress and the Muslim League. Shortly afterwards, a Labour government came to power in Britain. The new government decided to hold fresh elections; these were held at the beginning of 1946. The results were an overwhelming victory for Congress in the general seats, and for the Muslim League in the Muslim seats.

The government of India now, with incomparable stupidity, brought to trial in India a number of officers from the former Indian National Army. This gave immense publicity to the work of Subhas Bose, about which most of India was imperfectly informed. Naturally, the consequence was another wave of popular demonstrations. More dangerously still, a mutiny occurred in February 1946 in the Royal Indian Navy.

On 19 February, Clement Attlee, the British Prime Minister, announced a mission to India of some members of his Cabinet. The mission arrived in India in March 1946. After a series of discussions with leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League, in which no area of agreement between the two parties could be found, on 16 May 1946 the mission therefore announced its own recommendations.

They proposed (i) a Federal Government including the States; (ii) the division of India into three Provincial groups consisting of the North-west Frontier Province, Sind, Baluchistan, and the Punjab; Bengal and Assam; and the rest of India; (iii) a Constitution was to be framed by a Constituent Assembly elected on a communal basis by the Provincial Legislative Assemblies; (iv) the Provinces could leave the Federation after the election of its Assembly; and (v) a Provisional National Government should be established from leaders of the different parties.

The Muslim League accepted the proposals on 6 June, but the Congress

rejected them, though offering to join a Constituent Assembly for the purpose of framing a new Constitution. The Cabinet Mission left India on 29 June. The League then demanded that the Viceroy constitute the provisional government even without the Congress. This was not possible as the government must consist of all parties. The League now withdrew its acceptance of the Mission's proposals. The viceroy then reconstituted his Executive Council with Congress members only. The Muslim League's reaction was to declare 16 August as a day of 'Direct Action'. On that day, though most demonstrations were peaceful, in Calcutta a number of Hindus were killed and property looted and destroyed. The Hindus now took to the streets in self-defence and Calcutta became the scene of the most brutal communal riots. The Muslim League government then in office in Bengal took no decisive action, and neither did the British Governor nor the Central Government.

The swearing-in of Pandit Nehru and other Congress nominees to the viceroy's Executive Council was followed by other outbreaks of communal violence.

The viceroy now attempted to bring Muslim League members into his Council and succeeded in doing so, informing the Congress that the League had agreed to join a Constituent Assembly. Unfortunately, agreement within the Council was not achieved, and the unhappy situation was further worsened by the discovery that the League had actually no intention of joining in the Assembly at all. In spite of this, and without League participation, the Assembly met on 9 December 1946 and appointed committees to draft the provisions of the new Constitution.

On 20 February 1947, the British government declared its intention of leaving India by June 1948, and appointed Lord Mountbatten as viceroy to carry out the transfer of power. The response of the Muslim League was once again to indulge in 'Direct Action' in spite of its sanguinary results in 1946. Murder, arson, and general violence convulsed the Punjab and the North-west Frontier Province. The consequence was the reluctant acceptance by the Congress of the premise that, to achieve independence, India must be divided.

On 3 June, the new viceroy broadcast the declaration of the British government's policy, the substance of which can be summarized as follows:

- (i) If the areas with a majority of Muslim population so desired, they should be allowed to form a separate Dominion, and a new Constituent Assembly would be set up for that purpose. But in that case there would be a partition of Bengal and the Punjab, if the representatives of the Hindu majority districts in the Legislatures of those Provinces so desired.

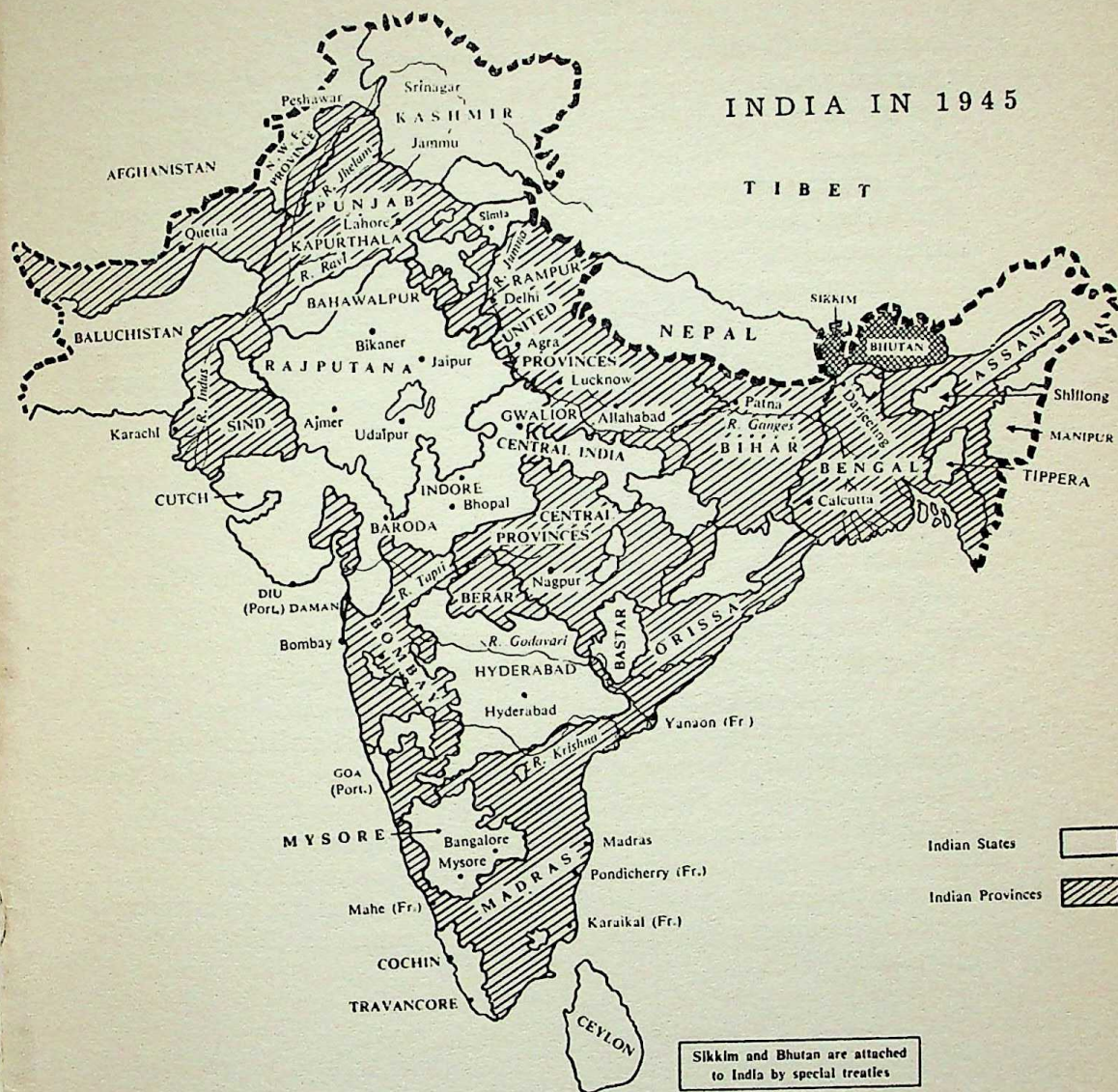
- (ii) A referendum would be taken in the North-west Frontier Province to ascertain whether it should join Pakistan or not.
- (iii) The district of Sylhet would be joined to the Muslim area in Bengal after the views of the people had been ascertained by a referendum.
- (iv) Boundary Commissions would be set up to define the boundaries of the Hindu and Muslim Provinces in Bengal and the Punjab.
- (v) Legislation would be introduced in the current session of Parliament for immediately conferring Dominion Status on India (or the two countries if partition was decided upon), without any prejudice to the final decision of the Constituent Assembly (or Assemblies) in this respect.

The scheme was finally accepted by both the Congress and the Muslim League, and the India Independence Act was passed through the British Parliament on 1 July 1947. The date for the transfer of power to India and Pakistan was to be 15 August 1947. On that day the Constituent Assembly in Delhi declared India a Dominion within the British Commonwealth, with Lord Mountbatten as its first Governor-General. In Karachi, Mr Jinnah was chosen as the first Governor-General of Pakistan. The British Indian Empire was at an end.

One consequence of the decision to partition India must be recorded. In the weeks preceding independence, the Punjab, which was about to be divided between the successor States, rapidly degenerated into anarchy. Well-armed bands of Sikhs and others roamed the country burning villages and massacring their inhabitants. By 17 August, the Province was cut off from Delhi except by air, and long processions of miserable refugees, Muslims fleeing westward and Hindus and Sikhs eastward, numbered hundreds of thousands. Trains were held up by gangs and travellers of communities different from the gangs' were murdered, including women and children. This situation lasted for two months after independence day. No one knows how many died but the total number of refugees involved in the upheavals was estimated at more than eight and a half million. The resettlement of these refugees is still a problem in both India and Pakistan, and the violence in the Punjab has remained a discreet but continuing sore in relations between the two countries.

This is not the place for an attempt at a thorough appreciation of British rule in India—we are too near to it and its consequences to be able to avoid emotion of one sort or another. The nature of British rule must be allowed to emerge from the foregoing pages, but there are certain achievements that demand a brief restatement.

From the middle of the nineteenth century, British administration ensured



the continuity of peace. Whatever the shortcomings of the judicial system, it was enlightened, and introduced into India the revolutionary concept of 'equality before the law' which is the political basis of the dignity of the individual.

The educational system, unprogressive as it was, helped to create a literate middle class and gave to it, in English, a language of the widest communication not only within the linguistic diversities of India but as an open door to the liberal concepts and scientific progress of the West.

Constitutional reforms, though slow and shadowy, supplied the structure of responsible government and democratic elections. Though in practice the institutions were without power, they supplied the schoolroom in which were learnt the techniques of democracy.

Above all, British domination achieved the unification of India and by doing so revived the national consciousness that had disappeared with the Mughals.

European scholars discovered India's past not only for themselves but for India itself, and thus raised the opinion of India in the West and gave to Indian nationalism those roots in tradition which are essential for vitality.

If the British are to look, not for a justification of their rule but for a certain pride in their achievement, it must lie in this—that the scaffolding of free India and Pakistan was their work. That out of exploitation came a unity of national purpose, and out of tyranny a sense of nationhood. By Britain's giving up the Empire, bitterness was dissolved and a new and vital friendship between the former rulers and their successors constructed out of the ruins. But the greatest satisfaction of all will be to see the new States, strong and influential, taking the best the British had to offer, yet building something new out of themselves. The final judgment on British rule lies in the future.

PRINCIPAL DATES

A.D.	
1858	India under the Crown: Queen Victoria's Proclamation
1861	Indian Councils Act
1862-3	Lord Elgin, Viceroy
1864-9	John Lawrence, Viceroy
1869	Opening of the Suez Canal
1869-72	Lord Mayo, Viceroy
1870	Construction of the Red Sea Telegraph
1872-6	Lord Northbrook, Viceroy
1875	Aligarh College founded by Syed Ahmad Khan Arya Samaj founded by Swami Dayananda
1876	Occupation of Quetta Queen Victoria proclaimed Empress of India Indian Association of Calcutta
1876-80	Lord Lytton, Viceroy
1878	Treaty of Berlin
1878-80	Second Afghan War
1880	Abdur Rahman, Amir of Kabul
1880-4	Lord Ripon, Viceroy
1883	Indian National Conference held in Calcutta
1883-4	Ilbert Bill controversy
1884-8	Lord Dufferin, Viceroy
1885	Indian National Congress founded Third Burmese War
1886	Annexation of Upper Burma Ramakrishna Mission founded
1888-94	Lord Lansdowne, Viceroy
1892	Indian Councils Act
1894-9	Lord Elgin II, Viceroy
1899-1905	Lord Curzon, Viceroy
1900	North-west Frontier Province created Land Alienation Act
1903-4	Expedition to Lhasa
1904	Universities Act Co-operative Societies Act Archaeological Department established by Curzon
1904-5	Russo-Japanese War
1905	Partition of Bengal
1905-10	Lord Minto II, Viceroy
1906	Muslim League founded
1907	Surat Congress—moderate/extremist clash
1909	Morley-Minto Reforms

- 1910-16 Lord Hardinge II, Viceroy
 1911 Bengal partition revoked
 1913 Nobel Prize for Rabindranath Tagore
 1914 Mahatma Gandhi returns from South Africa
 1914-18 First World War
 1916 Lucknow Pact between Congress and the Muslim League
 1916-21 Lord Chelmsford, Viceroy
 1917 British declaration on Indian self-government
 1919 Third Afghan War
 Massacre in the Jallianwala Bagh at Amritsar
 India a member of the League of Nations
 1920-2 Non-cooperation movement
Khilafat movement
 1921 Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms inaugurated
 Moplah rebellion
 1921-6 Lord Reading, Viceroy
 1923 Tariff Board set up
Swaraj Party formed
 1925 Cotton excise abolished
 1926-31 Lord Irwin, Viceroy
 1928 Simon Commission
 1930-1 First Civil Disobedience movement
 1930-2 Round Table Conferences
 1931 Gandhi-Irwin pact
 1931-6 Lord Willingdon, Viceroy
 1932 Second Civil Disobedience movement
 1935 Government of India Act
 1936-43 Lord Linlithgow, Viceroy
 1937 Provincial autonomy: Congress ministries elected
 1939 Resignation of Congress ministries
 1939-45 Second World War
 1940 Muslim League declares for Pakistan
 1942 Cripps Mission
 Congress disturbances: leaders arrested
 1943-7 Lord Wavell, Viceroy
 1945 End of war. Labour government in Britain
 1945-6 General elections in India
 1946 Cabinet Mission
 Violence in Bengal, Mutiny in the Indian Navy, etc.
 1947 Lord Mountbatten, Viceroy
 August 15. End of the Empire

Part Seven

THE PATTERN OF FREEDOM

I

The Divide of History

WITH THE DIVISION OF INDIA into predominantly Muslim and Hindu areas, we reach a division in the history of India which presents certain problems to the historian. It is easy to assume that the history of Pakistan until 1947 is identical with the history of the undivided India of which it formed a part—but that is not strictly so. The *political* history of Pakistan really begins with the first suggestions of the Urdu poet Iqbal, in his presidential address to the Muslim League in 1930, and the agitation for a separate State begun about the same time by Chaudhury Rahmat Ali. The history of India, which is predominantly that of the Hindu people, must of necessity after 1947 exclude Pakistan just as it must Burma, a part of the Indian Empire which achieved independence at almost the same time.

When we reach this divide in the history of India, we are also presented with the problem of dealing with the complexities of contemporary affairs, within the framework of a general approach to nearly five thousand years of history. Events within our knowledge demand a detailed treatment which would upset the balance of the book. There are, however, certain principles underlying the construction of this work and its approach to Indian history that have been outlined in the Introduction and must be allowed to work themselves out. The pattern of freedom is a distinctive one, and the movement of social and political changes in India since independence are of considerable importance, because they presage a revolution in the traditional structure of Indian society. The following method has therefore been adopted: to give a brief resumé of the integrating of the Princely States, for this represents an end-point in historical development; then a view of the changes in India and the influence upon them of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, for it is his figure that dominates India in its first years of independence; to give some of the possibilities of the future and, finally, to survey those changes in the social structure which are symptoms of the transfiguration of the India that this book has been mainly about.

Building the New India

I

THE INTEGRATION OF THE PRINCELY STATES

AS WE HAVE SEEN, the relation of the Princely States to the government of India was only through their feudal dependence upon the British Crown. The Cabinet Mission had recommended a Union of India embracing both British India and the States but that the States, having delegated to the central authority control over Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Communications, 'should retain all subjects and powers other than those ceded to the Union'. This was accepted, but with extensive provisos, by the Chamber of Princes on 29 January 1947 in the following resolution.

(i) The entry of the States into the Union shall be on no other basis than that of negotiation, and the final decision will rest with each State . . . which can only be taken after consideration of the complete picture of the Constitution.

(ii) All the rights surrendered by the States to the Paramount power will return to the States. The proposed Union of India will, therefore, exercise only such functions in relation to the States in regard to Union Subjects as are assigned or delegated by them to the Union. Every State shall continue to retain its sovereignty and all rights and powers except those that have been expressly delegated by it. There can be no question of any powers being vested or inherent or implied in the Union in respect of the States unless specifically agreed to by them.

(iii) The Constitution of each State, its territorial integrity and the succession of its reigning dynasty in accordance with the law, custom, and usage of the State, shall not be interfered with by the Union or any part thereof.

After the decision to partition India, the larger States refused to accept the changed situation and declared their right to independence. In this, they were supported by the Muslim League. However, following the advice of Lord Mountbatten, most of the States agreed on 25 July to accede to the

Indian Union or, in the case of the States in the territory of the new dominion of Pakistan, to that State.

The process of integration continued and considerable reorganization of administrative areas took place. There remained two significant exceptions—Hyderabad and Kashmir.

Hyderabad, the largest State in India, had a Muslim ruler and a predominantly Hindu population. The State entered into a Standstill Agreement with the Indian Union in November 1947 to maintain the situation before the transfer of power. Hyderabad, however, considered itself an independent State. This was quite unacceptable to the Indian Union to whom 'an independent State completely landlocked within the heart of another is an unheard-of proposition'. At the same time, the activities of extreme Muslim elements known as *Razakars* were creating incidents on the borders between India and Hyderabad.

All negotiations proved abortive and those elements in Hyderabad, against accession to India, began to form irregular armies with weapons smuggled from abroad. The government of India demanded the disbanding of the *Razakars* but the Nizam would not agree and sent a delegation to the United Nations in order to put his case. Indian troops marched into Hyderabad in September 1948. The State now acceded to the Indian Union, though the Nizam remains the nominal ruler.

In the State of Jammu and Kashmir, a critical situation had developed. Some seventy-seven per cent of the population of that State was Muslim, but the ruler was Hindu. Since Kashmir had a common frontier with Pakistan and a large Muslim population, the new Dominion naturally hoped it would accede to them. The Maharaja, however, could not make up his mind. Disorders in the State, and their suppression, led to the cutting-off of supplies and communication with Pakistan. About 22 October 1947, Pathan tribesmen crossed the western border of Kashmir, well-armed with rifles, machine-guns, mortars, and artillery, with at least the moral support of Pakistan. Burning, looting, and murdering, they approached the State capital of Srinagar.

The Maharaja now appealed to India for help, and offered the accession of the State to the Indian Union. The latter accepted, subject to a plebiscite being taken in Kashmir. Indian troops were now flown in.

On 31 December, the Indian Union placed the question of Kashmir, and what it believed to be indirect aggression by Pakistan, before the Security Council of the United Nations. After fruitless negotiations, a United Nations Commission arrived in India in July 1948, and a cease-fire agreement was finally signed by the government of the Indian Union and Pakistan in January 1949.

The hopes for a settlement to the 'Kashmir problem' were ill-founded and on either side of the cease-fire line administrations have been established in direct relations with India and Pakistan.

II

THE HAND AND THE SYMBOL

On 30 January 1948, Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated at a prayer-meeting in New Delhi by a member of an extreme orthodox Hindu party. In 1936 he had said:

'There is no such thing as "Gandhism" and I do not want to leave any sect after me. I do not claim to have originated any new principle or doctrine. I have simply tried in my own way to apply the eternal truths to our daily life and problems. There is, therefore, no question of my leaving any code. . . . The opinions I have formed and the conclusions I have arrived at are not final. I may change them tomorrow. I have nothing new to teach the world. . . . All I have done is to try experiments in truth and non-violence on as vast a scale as I could.'

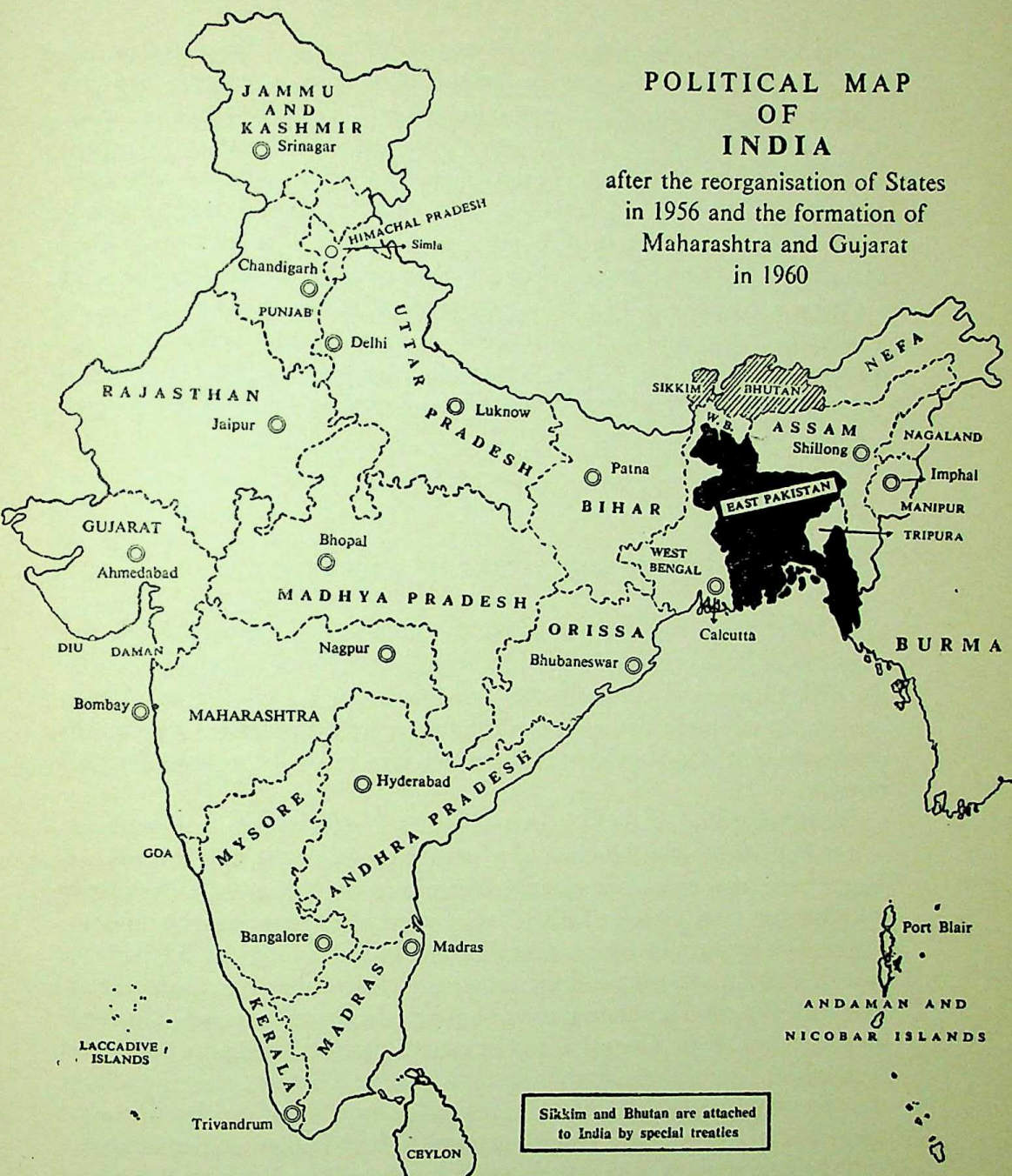
His influence on the India of today is difficult to see. If he had lived, Indian economic development would have been slow, for he believed in the spinning-wheel and the village when the future lies in the town and the machine. His contribution to India was of a different order, for he was the greatest reformer in the history of Hinduism. He was also a democrat who brought a sense of nationhood to the very lowest untouchable. His unshakeable belief that means are more important than ends inspired India's leaders to keep to democratic methods when the appalling difficulties of a new nation may have tempted them into dictatorship.

With the death of Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru became the dominant figure in the new India; both the hand that guided the new revolution and the symbol of its struggle for freedom. The stature of India in the world today is of his making.

A recent writer has described the effect of Nehru as a 'revolution by consent' for it is a *legal* revolution unsullied by the hates of class warfare. The organization of social change by co-operation has a Socialist background, but it is not the conventional Socialism of the West which grew in opposition to a highly organized capitalist economy. Such an economy never existed in India, and the State has taken upon itself the role of planner, provider of capital, and operator of industrial undertakings. There is no attempt to *destroy* existing private enterprise; to work in co-operation with it

POLITICAL MAP OF INDIA

after the reorganisation of States
in 1956 and the formation of
Maharashtra and Gujarat
in 1960



Based on a map from INDIA 1951, Published by the Government of India

is part of the plan for India's economic development. Nehru's Socialism is non-doctrinaire, and because its methods take their inspiration from the Hindu attitude to life, tolerance and persuasion, an apparent lack of formulated principles, changes of attitude, compromise and bargaining, it appears to the West with its tradition of doctrinal and rigid Socialism as incomprehensible and lacking in seriousness. To accept this short-sighted view is to fall into the recurring trap of nomenclature. What is happening in India is a new thing, which has no exact parallel in the West. It is a synthesis, by no means complete or in some aspects even adequate, between the Hindu traditions of tolerance and non-violence and the Western traditions of responsibility and the rule of law. That such a synthesis has been attempted is the result of Gandhi's belief in, and practice of, humility, and the Western awareness of Pandit Nehru.

III

THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE FUTURE

The historian, as Schlegel remarked, is a prophet looking backwards, and if he is wise he does not indulge in the foretelling of future events—an exercise best left to political commentators and newspaper correspondents. Nevertheless, the historian has a duty to the future, for his researches are into the materials of it and should at least permit him to posit the possibilities of action.

The dominance of such a personality as Pandit Nehru is nevertheless controlled within the structure of a parliamentary democracy. In 1951-2, one of the most significant general elections in the history of representative government took place in India. The number of electors was 176 millions, eighty-five per cent of whom were illiterate. In spite of this, all the evidence proves that the great mass of the people understood, however inadequately, the basic issues involved, and more than half the electorate voted. The result was a victory for the Congress. But in various parts of the country opposition candidates, including Communists, won seats. The two most significant results were the jolting of the Congress's smug belief in the uncritical gratitude of the people, and the complete humiliation of the orthodox Hindu communal parties who hated Pakistan and the Muslims, but whose real aim was to preserve the feudal patterns of land-ownership.

The stability of India has rested in a large middle class who, adopting from their last conquerors Western political ideals, and bringing to them the permanent strains of Hindu tradition, have occupied the position of power. The new intelligentsia, however, is becoming divorced from this

tradition, and as it is difficult to absorb the number of students produced by the Universities, young men are looking towards other methods to answer their claims. Communist propaganda is winning its recruits from this class as it does from the new industrial proletariat.

The great mass of the Indian people still consists of the peasants who have no knowledge of democracy and care little what name is given to the rulers. The expansion of population has meant competition for land. The great movement of industrial development has meant higher taxes. The fundamental problem for independent India is the control of population growth, for no industrial expansion can absorb it. It is well to remember that the victory of Communism in China was the victory of an agricultural people and peasant armies.

Nothing, however, succeeds like success. A renascent and vigorous China under Communist rule has ruthlessly attacked the problems of the country. India, moving slowly, may succumb to the blandishments of Communism merely because it offers the chance to overcome in a generation or less the fantastic problems of a 'backward' country. If democracy fails, India must and will try something else.

The Transformation of Traditional India

IN THE INTRODUCTION, it was stated that the underlying thesis of this book lay in the concept of the *continuity* of India. Despite the impact of invaders, their religious, political, and economic ideas, and the endemic anarchy which with appalling consistency followed the collapse of empires, the essential structure of Hindu India remained unchanged and was, in fact, reinforced by exterior pressure and the climate of insecurity. The foundations of the Hindu social structure, the wire fence that has protected it, are the four principles of Duty (*Dharma*), Action (*Karma*), Caste (*Varna*), and Caste Responsibility (*Varnashrama Dharma*).

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, some of the external practices of Hinduism were legislated away, but the rigidities of caste remain sanctified by religion and maintained by tradition. No conqueror has ever attempted to destroy the Hindu pattern of society, so that it has supplied the only continuing stable element throughout Indian history, as well as the framework of the unity of India.

The monolithic imperturbability of caste has been only its exterior appearance, and there have been movements within the caste structure. At the same time, caste has been related to the economic strata.

Today, for several reasons, caste is being subjected to revolutionary pressures which will inevitably transform it. Migration from the village to the town is continuous, and those that move come usually from the two extremes of the caste system—the untouchable, who has very little to lose by changing his home, and the Brahmin, whose education and intelligence will have wider possibilities. Once in the town, the untouchable, becoming a labourer in a factory, is subject to the influence of labour leaders and others who convince him of his equality with his neighbour. The Brahmin who has not found success in the town loses the arrogant confidence of his upper-caste position. Education, too, is slowly spreading to the village and with it a questioning of the old order. The pressures of population-growth are destroying the village community and driving its members into the towns and subjecting them to the radiation of different ideas and opportunities.

The necessity of organizing votes in the General Election of 1951 forced the deference of high-caste candidates to the opinions of low-caste voters. For the first time, the latter found themselves wooed by those who needed their vote.

These and many other factors—the legal removal of restrictions on untouchables, the expansion of welfare projects, rural electrification, radio sets which bring the outside world to the world of the village, these and others more subtle and slower are undermining the pattern of traditional India. These changes are not sensational, a revolution by a single blow, for surprising as it may seem the structure of Hindu society has always been tolerant of change. What is emerging is a new fluidity within caste, the last response of the Hindu system to outside pressure. The process is complex and what form it will take in the next few years is difficult to forecast.

In the past, Hindu society has made little or no attempt to come to terms with a conquering political system deriving its strength from outside Hindu ideas and concepts. The present government of India, a modern administration on Western lines, has adopted certain elements from the Hindu tradition. The experiment of India is unique and out of it may emerge a new stability and strength. India is 'uncommitted' to either Communism or the West because it is irrevocably committed to the working out of a new system—whose roots are older than both.

THE PRINCIPAL DYNASTIES AND RULERS OF INDIA 322 B.C.-A.D. 1950

Complete genealogical tables are not given; only such rulers of importance as can be given accurate or reasonably approximate dates are listed.

THE MAURYA DYNASTY 322 B.C.-185 B.C.

Chandragupta Maurya	322 B.C. (Possibly earlier, 298 B.C.)
Bindusara Amitraghata	298 B.C.-273 B.C.
Asoka-vardhana	273 B.C.-232 B.C.
Dasaratha	succeeded in eastern provinces 232 B.C.-?
Sauprati	succeeded in western provinces 232 B.C.-?
Brihadratha	last Maurya king, killed 185 B.C.

THE SUNGA DYNASTY 185 B.C.-73 B.C.

Pushyamitra	185 B.C.-?
Devabhuti	last Sunga king killed, 73 B.C.

THE INDO-GREEK KINGS AND OTHER FOREIGN RULERS

c. 200 B.C.-c. A.D. 220

Demetrios 'King of the Indians'	c. 200 B.C.-190 B.C.
Pantalea and Agathokles, Kings of Taxila	c. 190 B.C.-180 B.C.
Menander (Milinda), King of the Punjab	c. 180 B.C.-160 B.C.
Eucratides, King of Bactria	ruled c. 175 B.C.
Antialkidas, King of Taxila	c. 140 B.C.-130 B.C.
Heliokles, last Greek King of Bactria	c. 140 B.C.-130 B.C.
Maues, Saka(?) King of Araclosia and Punjab	c. 95 B.C.
Gondopharnes, King of Taxila	c. A.D. 20-48
Kadphises I, Kushan, King of the Great Yueh-chi	c. 40-died c. 77
succeeded Gondopharnes	c. 48
Kadphises II	c. 78-c. 110
Kanishka Kushan	c. 120-c. 160
Huvishka	c. 160-c. 182
Vasudeva I	c. 182-c. 220

THE IMPERIAL GUPTAS A.D. 320-499

Chandragupta I	320-c. 330
Samudragupta	c. 330-c. 380

The Principal Dynasties and Rulers of India

349

Chandragupta II	c. 380-415
Kumaragupta I	c. 415-55
Skandagupta	455-c. 480
Budhagupta	latest known date, 499

IMPERIAL KANAUJ

Harsha-vardhana	606-c. 647
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THE EARLY CHALUKYAS 543-757

Pulakesin I	543-4
Pulakesin II	608-42
Vikramaditya I	655-80
Vikramaditya II	733-46
Kirthavarman II	746-57

THE EASTERN CHALUKYAS c. 650-1122

Kubja Vishnuvardhana I, brother of Pulakesin II	Seventh century
Chalukya-Bhima (14th in succession from Vishnuvardhana I)	crowned 892
Vijayaditya VI (23rd in succession)	?945-70
Rajendra III (28th in succession). United Eastern Chalukya and Chola crowns and reigned as Kulottunga Chola I	1070-?1122

THE RASHTRAKUTA DYNASTY c. 760-973

Krishna I (6th in succession). Constructed Kailasa rock-cut temple at Ellura	c. 760-?800
Indra IV	ceased to rule 973

THE CHOLA KINGS c. 846-1279

Vijayalaya	c. 846-71
Rajaraja (the Great)	985-1018
Rajendra I	?1018-44
Rajendra III, Chalukya } Kulottunga I	1070-?1122
Rajendra IV	1246-79

SULTANS OF THE BAHMANI DYNASTY OF THE DECCAN 1347-1518

Ala-ud-din	1347-58
Muhammad I	1358-73

The Principal Dynasties and Rulers of India

Mujahid	1373—murdered by Daud, 1378
Daud	1378—murdered the same year
Muhammad II	1378-97
Ghiyas-ud-din	1397—blinded and deposed the same year
Shams-ud-din	1397—deposed the same year
Firuz	1397—deposed and murdered by Ahmad
Ahmad	1422-1435
Ala-ud-din II	1435-1457
Humayun	1457—possibly murdered 1461
Nizam	1461-1463
Muhammad III	1463-1482
Mahmud	1482-1518

THE SULTANS OF BIJAPUR 1490-1686

Yusuf (governor, under the Bahmani sultan)	1490-1510
Ismail	1510-34
Mallu	1534—deposed and blinded, 1535
Ibrahim I	1535-57
Ali	1557—murdered 1580
Ibrahim II	1580-1626
Muhammad (tributary of Shah Jahan, 1636)	1626-56
Ali II	1656-73
Sikandar	1673-86. Captured by Aurangzeb, and dynasty ended

THE RULERS OF VIJAYANAGAR 1336-1585

Harihara I—chief, not of royal rank. (Traditional date of the founding of Vijayanagar, 1336)	1336-54
Bukha I—disputed succession. Chief, not of royal rank	1354-77
<i>First Dynasty—Sangama</i>	
Harihara II (son of Bukha I)	1377-?1404
Bukha II—disputed succession	?1404-6
Devaraya I	1406-22
Vira Vijaya—disputed succession	1422-5
Devaraya II—once co-ruler with Vira Vijaya: sole ruler from ?1425	1425-47

The Principal Dynasties and Rulers of India

351

Mallikajuna (real ruler Narasimha Saluva,

minister of above from c. 1455)

1447-65

Virupahsa

1465-85

Praudhadevaraya

1485-6

Second Dynasty—Saluva

Narasimha Saluva

1486-?1492

Immadi Narasimha (power exercised by

Narasa Nayaka)

?1492-1503

Third Dynasty—Tuluva

Vira Narasinha (son of Narasa Nayaka;

murdered Immadi, 1503)

1503-9

Krishnadevaraya

1509-29

Achyuta

1529-42

Venkata I

1542—murdered same year

Sadasiva (real ruler Ramaraja, died 1565

and death followed by chaos)

1542-65

Fourth Dynasty—Aravidu, or Karnata

Tirumala (brother of Ramaraja)

c. 1570-c. 1573

Ranga

c. 1573-85

Venkata. Capital removed to Chandra-

giri. Collapse of kingdom

1585

THE SO-CALLED SLAVE DYNASTY OF DELHI 1206-90

Kutub-ud-din Aibak

1206-10

Iltutmish

1211-36

Firuz Shah

1236—deposed and murdered, same year

Raziyya (daughter of Iltutmish)

1236—deposed and died, 1240

Bahram

1240-2

Nasir-ud-din Mahmud

1246-66

Ghiyas-ud-din Balban

1266-87

Muiz-ud-din Kaikubal

1287—killed 1290

THE KHILJI SULTANS OF DELHI 1290-1320

Jalal-ud-din

1290-6

Ala-ud-din

1296-1316

Shihab-ud-din Umar

1316

Kutub-ud-din Mubarak

1316-20

Nasir-ud-din Khusru (usurper)

1320

THE HOUSE OF TUGHLUK 1320-1413

Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluk I	1320-5
Muhammad Tughluk	1325-51
Firuz Shah	1351-88
Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluk II	1388—deposed 1389
Abu Bakr	1389—deposed 1390
Nasir-ud-din	1390-4
Ala-ud-din	1394
Nusrat Shah—disputed succession	1395-1398 or 1399
Mahmud Shah	1398 or 1399-1413

THE SAYYID RULERS OF DELHI 1414-51

Khizr Khan	1414-21
Muiz-ud-din Mubarak	1421—killed 1434
Muhammad Shah	1434-45
Ala-ud-din	1445
	Removed to Badaun 1450

THE LODI DYNASTY 1451-1526

Bahlul Lodi	1451-89
Sikandar Lodi	1489-1517
Ibrahim Lodi	1517-26

THE SUR (AFGHAN) DYNASTY 1540-1557

Sher Khan (Sher Shah)	1540—killed 1545
Islam Shah	1545-54
Muhammad Adil Shah	1554-5—killed at Monghyr 1556

THE HOUSE OF TIMUR (THE MUGHALS) 1526-1857

Babur	1526-30
Humayun	1530-56
Akbar	1556-1605
Jahangir	1605-27
Shah Jahan	1627—deposed 1658 died 1666
Aurangzeb Alamgir	1658-1707
Bahadur Shah I, sometimes called Shah Alam I	1707-12
Jahandar Shah	1712—murdered 1713
Farrukhsiyar	1713—murdered 1719
Rafi-ud-daulat	1719
Shah Jahan II	1719

The Principal Dynasties and Rulers of India

353

Muhammad Shah	1719-48
Muhammad Ibrahim	1720 for one month
Ahmad Shah	1748—deposed 1754
Alamgir II	1754—murdered 1759
Shah Alam II	1759-1806
Akbar II	1806-37
Bahadur Shah II	1837—deposed 1857

THE MARATHA PESHWAS 1713-1818

Balaji Visvanath	1713-20
Baji Rao I	1720-40
Balaji Baji Rao	1740-61
Madhava Rao I	1761-72
Narayan Rao	1772-3
Raghunath Rao (Raghoba)	1773-4
Madhava Rao II	1774-96
Chimnaji Appa	1796
Baji Rao II	1796—deposed 1818

THE FAMILY OF SINDHIA

Ranoji Sindhia	1726-50
Madhava Rao Sindhia (Mahadaji)	died 1794
Daulat Rao Sindhia	1794-1827

THE SIKH KINGDOM OF THE PUNJAB 1798-1849

Ranjit Singh	born 1780, died 1839 effective ruler of Lahore from 1798
Kharak Singh	1839-40
Nao Nehal Singh	1840
Sher Singh	1840-3
Dulip Singh	1843—deposed 1849

THE NIZAMS OF HYDERABAD 1713-1948

Nizam-ul-mulk, Asaf Jah	1713-48
Created Subadar (governor) of the Deccan by Mughal Emperor 1713. To all practical purposes independent from 1724	
Mir Muhammad Nasir Jang	1748-50
Muzaffar Jang	1750-1
Mir Asaf-ud-daula Salabat Jang	1751-61

Nizam Ali	1762-1803
Mir Akbar Ali Khan, Sikandar Jah	1803-29
Nasir-ud-daula Farkhundah Ali Khan	1829-57
Afzul-ud-daula	1857-69
Mir Mahbub Ali Khan	1869-1911
H. E. H. Nawab Mir Usman Ali Khan	
Bahadur Fateh Jang	1911-State absorbed into the Indian Union 1948, Nizam remaining as constitutional Governor.

THE NAWABS AND KINGS OF OUDH 1722-1856

Sa'adat Ali I	1722-39
Safdar Jang	1739-54
Shuja-ud-daula	1754-75
Asaf-ud-daula	1775-97
Wazir Ali	1797-deposed 1798
Sa'adat Ali II	1798-1814
Ghazi-ud-din	1814-27
assumed title of 'king' 1819	
Nasir-ud-din	1827-37
Muhammad Ali	1837-42
Amjad Ali	1842-7
Wajid Ali	1847-deposed 1856

THE NAWABS OF BENGAL 1740-1770

Alivardi Khan	1740-56
Siraj-ud-daula	1756-7
Mir Jafar	i 1757-60
	ii 1763-5
Mir Kasim	1760-3
Najim-ud-daula	1765-6
Saif-ud-daula	1766-70

BRITISH GOVERNORS-GENERAL AND VICEROYS 1774-1947

Temporary and Officiating in Italic type

Governors-General of Fort William in Bengal. Regulating Act 1773

Warren Hastings	October 1774
<i>Sir John Macpherson</i>	February 1785
Earl (Marquess) Cornwallis	September 1786
Sir John Shore	1793

The Principal Dynasties and Rulers of India

355

<i>Sir A. Clarke</i>	March 1798
Earl of Mornington (Marquess Wellesley)	May 1798
Marquess Cornwallis (second time)	July 1805
<i>Sir George Barlow</i>	October 1805
Baron (Earl of) Minto I	July 1807
Earl of Moira (Marquess of Hastings)	October 1813
<i>John Adam</i>	January 1823
Baron (Earl) Amherst	August 1823
<i>W. B. Bailey</i>	March 1828
Lord William Bentinck	July 1828

Governors-General of India. Charter Act 1833

Lord William Bentinck	1833
<i>Sir Charles Metcalfe</i>	March 1835
Baron (Earl of) Auckland	March 1836
Baron (Earl of) Ellenborough	February 1842
<i>W. W. Bird</i>	June 1844
Sir Henry (Viscount) Hardinge	July 1844
Earl (Marquess) of Dalhousie	January 1848
Viscount (Earl) Canning	February 1856

Governors-General and Viceroys

Viscount (Earl) Canning	November 1858
Earl of Elgin I	March 1862
<i>Sir Robert Napier</i>	1863
<i>Sir William Denison</i>	1863
Sir John (Lord) Lawrence	January 1864
Earl of Mayo	January 1869
<i>Sir John Strachey</i>	1872
<i>Lord Napier of Merchistoun</i>	1872
Baron (Earl of) Northbrook	May 1872
Baron (Earl of) Lytton I	April 1876
Marquess of Ripon	June 1880
Earl of Dufferin (Marquess of Dufferin and Ava)	December 1884
Marquess of Lansdowne	December 1888
Earl of Elgin II	January 1894
Baron (Marquess) Curzon	January 1899
<i>Lord Amptbill</i>	April 1904

Marquess Curzon (reappointed)	December 1904
Earl of Minto II	November 1905
Baron Hardinge of Penshurst	November 1910
Baron Chelmsford	April 1916
Earl of Reading	April 1921
<i>Lord Lytton II</i>	1925
Lord Irwin	April 1926
Earl of Willingdon	April 1931
<i>Sir George Stanley</i>	1934
Marquess of Linlithgow	April 1936

Governors-General and Crown Representatives. Act of 1935

Marquess of Linlithgow	March 1937
<i>Baron Brabourne</i>	1938
Marquess of Linlithgow	1938
Viscount (Earl) Wavell	1943
<i>Sir John Colville</i>	1945
Viscount (Earl) Mountbatten	March–August 1947
	Last Viceroy of united India

Governors-General. Indian Independence Act 1947.

INDIAN UNION

Earl Mountbatten	1947
C. Rajagopalachari	Officiating November 1947
	June 1948

PAKISTAN

M. A. Jinnah	August 1947–died September 1948
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THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA

Rajendra Prasad. First President	1950
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Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, 83, 93

Central Press Photos Ltd, 124

Vitold de Golish, Paris, 2, 12, 21, 24, 26, 30, 31, 87

Louis Frédéric (Agence Rapho, Paris), 4, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 23, 27, 28, 29, 35, 36,
39, 44

Government of India, Department of Archaeology, 1, 82, 88

India Office Library, 40, 46, 47, 56, 57, 58, 61, 62, 63, 64, 67, 71, 75, 76, 89, 91, 92,
100, 101, 102, 106, 109, 110, 111

Information Service of India, 43, 45, 48, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 59, 60, 65, 68, 70, 72,
73, 74, 77, 78, 79, 80, 114, 117, 119, 120, 121, 125, 126, 127

Richard Lannoy, 9, 15, 20, 22, 25, 32, 33, 37, 38, 49, 66, 69, 81

Radio Times Hulton Picture Library, London, 41, 42, 90, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 104,
105, 108, 113, 115, 116, 118

Pierre Rambach, Paris, 3

The Times of India, 122

Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 6, 7, 8, 10, 17, 19, 34, 40, 103

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

GODS

- 1 Goddess. Terracotta figurine from Charsada, near Peshawar. 4th century B.C.
- 2 Indra. Brahman Cave Temple, Aihole. 6th century A.D.
- 3 Surya. Baital Deul Temple, Bhubaneswar. 8th century A.D.
- 4 Agni. Kesava Temple, Somnathpur. A.D. 1268
- 5 The Hindu Trinity. South Indian, after a 19th century steel engraving
- 6 The Hindu Holy Family. Painting from Guler. c. 1755
- 7 Siva Nataraja. Madras. 10th-11th century A.D.
- 8 Siva Ardhanari. Mathura. c. 3rd century A.D.
- 9 Linga Temple, Tanjore. c. A.D. 1000
- 10 Linga Worship. Painting from Mandu, Central India. c. 1550
- 11 Vishnu. Aihole. 6th century A.D.
- 12 Vishnu incarnate as a man-boar. Durga Temple, Aihole. 8th century A.D.
- 13 Durga. Aihole. 6th century A.D.
- 14 Parvati. South Indian. 15th century A.D.
- 15 Kali. Appliqué banner. Kumaon Hills. 20th century A.D.
- 16 The Infant Krishna. South Indian. 18th century A.D.
- 17 Hanuman. Painting. Calcutta Bazaar School. Late 19th century
- 18 Ganesha. Hoysalesvara Temple, Halebid. Middle 12th century A.D.
- 19 Death of the Buddha. Gandhara. 2nd-4th century A.D.
- 20 The Buddha. Tinthal Cave, Ellura. c. A.D. 700
- 21 Jina, Mahavira. Badami. 6th century A.D.
- 22 A seller of religious prints. Hyderabad, Deccan. 20th century A.D.

HOUSES OF GODS AND MEN

- 23 Ellura. Visvakarma Cave. 8th century A.D.
- 24 Badami. The Temple of Malagitti Sivalaya. 6th century A.D.
- 25 Ajanta. Cave 1. Detail of a fresco. 5th century A.D.
- 26 Badami. Jina Cave Temple. 6th century A.D.
- 27 Sanchi. North gateway of the Great Stupa. 1st century B.C.-1st century A.D.
- 28 Sanchi. Detail of Plate 27
- 29 Buddhist votive object from the Swat Valley. 5th century A.D.
- 30 Bhubaneswar. The Temple of Baital Deul. 9th century A.D.
- 31 Khajuraho. Visvanath Temple. 11th century A.D.
- 32 Badami. The village
- 33 Village India
- 34 Agra. Building the Red Fort. c. A.D. 1565. Mughal painting, c. 1600
- 35 Delhi. The Red Fort. c. 1650

- 36 Agra. The Taj Mahal. 1632-47
- 37 Jaipur. Hawa Mahal. 18th century
- 38 Benares. Aurangzeb's mosque. c. 1669
- 39 Bijapur. Tomb of the Sultan Ibrahim II. 1615
- 40 Lucknow. Mosque of the Tomb of the Nawab Asaf-ud-daula. 1784. Water-colour by an Indian artist. c. 1848
- 41 Calcutta. Engraving. Early 19th century
- 42 Lucknow. The Begum Koti. Early 19th century
- 43 New Delhi. Viceroy's House. 1930
- 44 Jaipur. Jai Singh's observatory. 1734

LIFE IN VILLAGE AND TOWN

- 45 Diwali, the Festival of Lights
- 46 A Muslim marriage. From an album of drawings made in Lucknow. c. 1800
- 47 A Muslim burial. From the same album as Plate 46
- 48 The Festival of Holi
- 49 At the Burning Ghat, Benares
- 50 The *Granth Sabib*
- 51 The Festival of Id-ul-Fitr
- 52-53 The Festival of Dussehra
- 54 Buddhist relics at Sanchi
- 55 A village feast
- 56 The European in India. c. 1800
- 57 A swinging party. Deccani painting illustrating the musical mode, Hindola Raga. c. 1770
- 58 Irrigation. From an album of paintings probably made in Lucknow. c. 1830
- 59 Ploughing
- 60 Extracting jute
- 61 A sugar press. From an album of paintings probably made in Benares. c. 1818
- 62-64 Dry-field cultivation; Wet-field cultivation; Threshing grain. Tracing from manuscript commissioned in Kashmir by William Moorecroft. c. 1820
- 65 Winnowing wheat
- 66 A jeweller
- 67 Two barbers at work. From an album of paintings probably made in Murshidabad. c. 1780
- 68 Shaving a customer
- 69 A market near Udaipur
- 70 A village cloth-shop
- 71 A hand-loom weaver. From an album of paintings probably made in Lucknow. c. 1830
- 72 Carving in sandalwood

List of Illustrations

365

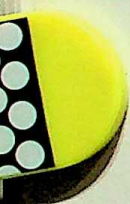
- 73 The village potter
- 74 An Indian railway workshop
- 75 The village blacksmith. From the same album as Plate 71
- 76 A Hindu teacher and his class. From the same album as Plate 61
- 77 Rural education
- 78 A village reading-room
- 79 An old woman learns to write
- 80 La Martinière College, Lucknow
- 81 At work in the laboratory of the Food Research Centre, Mysore

PORTRAITS OF POWER

- 82 Asoka. Lion pillar, Sarnath
- 83 Alexander the Great
- 84 Eucratides, King of Bactria
- 85 Menander, King of Kabul
- 86 Harsha-vardhana, Ruler of Kanauj. Signature from a copper-plate grant
- 87 Vikramaditya II Chalukya. Sculpture at Pattadakal. c. A.D. 740
- 88 Kanishka Kushan. Statue in yellow limestone
- 89 Timur. Mughal miniature. c. 1780
- 90 Babur and Akbar. Mughal miniature. Early 19th century
- 91 Shah Jahan. Mughal miniature. c. 1770
- 92 Jahangir. Mughal miniature. c. 1770
- 93 Aurangzeb. Mughal miniature. c. 1700
- 94 Joseph-François, Marquis Dupleix
- 95 Robert, Lord Clive receiving the Diwani of Bengal
- 96 Warren Hastings by Joshua Reynolds
- 97 Sir William Jones by Joshua Reynolds
- 98 Arthur Wellesley by Robert Home
- 99 Richard Colley, Marquess Wellesley by Robert Home
- 100 A sepoy baking bread. From the same album as Plate 61
- 101 A sepoy in the Bengal Army. From an album of paintings probably made in Murshidabad. c. 1806
- 102 A British officer in a palanquin. From an album of paintings probably made in Vellore. c. 1828
- 103 Tipu's tiger
- 104 Lord William Bentinck
- 105 Lord Macaulay
- 106 Ram Mohun Roy. Watercolour by an Indian artist. c. 1810
- 107 Sir William Sleeman
- 108 Lord Dalhousie
- 109 Sir Henry Lawrence. Miniature by Ghulam Khan. 1852

- 110 Ranjit Singh. From an album of paintings made in the Punjab. c. 1840
- 111 Sikh rulers and ministers, and the Amir of Afghanistan. Coloured woodcut made in the Punjab. c. 1840
- 112 Lord Canning
- 113 Lord Lawrence
- 114 Jamsetji Tata
- 115 Lord Ripon
- 116 Lord Curzon
- 117 Rabindranath Tagore
- 118 Lord Irwin
- 119 Cover of a letter from M. K. Gandhi to Count Leo Tolstoy
- 120 Mahatma Gandhi and Sir Stafford Cripps
- 121 M. A. Jinnah and Mahatma Gandhi
- 122 Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose
- 123 Mahatma Gandhi and Lady Mountbatten
- 124 Pandit Nehru
- 125 Master Tara Singh
- 126 Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
- 127 Dr Rajendra Prasad

ILLUSTRATIONS





I GODDESS Terracotta figurine from Charsada, near Peshawar. 4th century B.C.
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2 INDRA, KING OF THE GODS to the Aryans, but in later Hinduism a lesser deity and lord of thunder and rain; seen here riding on his mount, the Airavata elephant. Brahman Cave Temple, Aihole. 6th century A.D.
Indra, Surya and Agni (*opposite*), are the three great deities of the *Vedas*, presiding respectively over air, sky and earth



3 SURYA the Sun-God, on his seven-horse chariot. Baital Deul Temple, Bhubaneswar. 8th century A.D. The god here represents one of the forms of Vishnu



4 AGNI God of Fire. With Indra and Surya, Agni is one of the *lokapalas*, or guardians of the world, who preside over the eight points of the compass—Indra at the east, Surya at the south-west, and Agni at the south-east. Kesava Temple,



5

5 THE HINDU TRINITY: Siva, Vishnu, Brahma. South Indian, after a 19th-century steel engraving

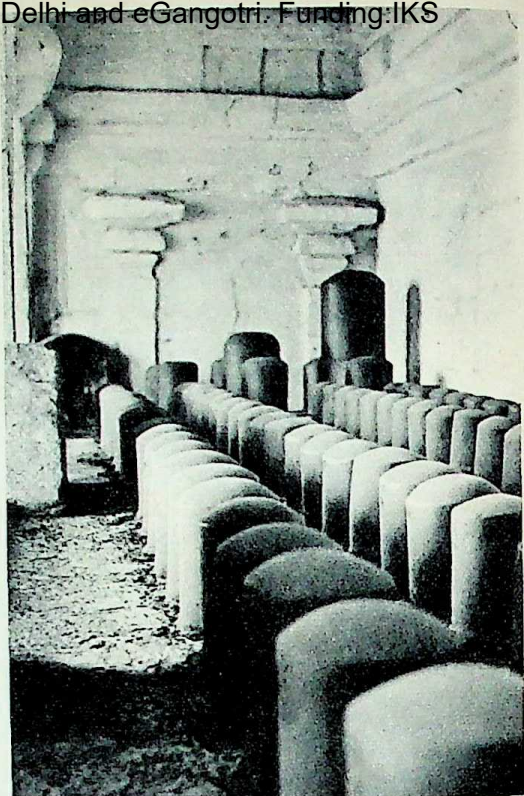
6 THE HINDU HOLY FAMILY Siva and Parvati on Mount Kailasa. With them are their son, Ganesha, and his mount, the rat; their second son, Skanda; and Nandi the Bull on which Siva rides. The necklace of skulls is an emblem of Siva. Painting from Guler. c. A.D. 1755





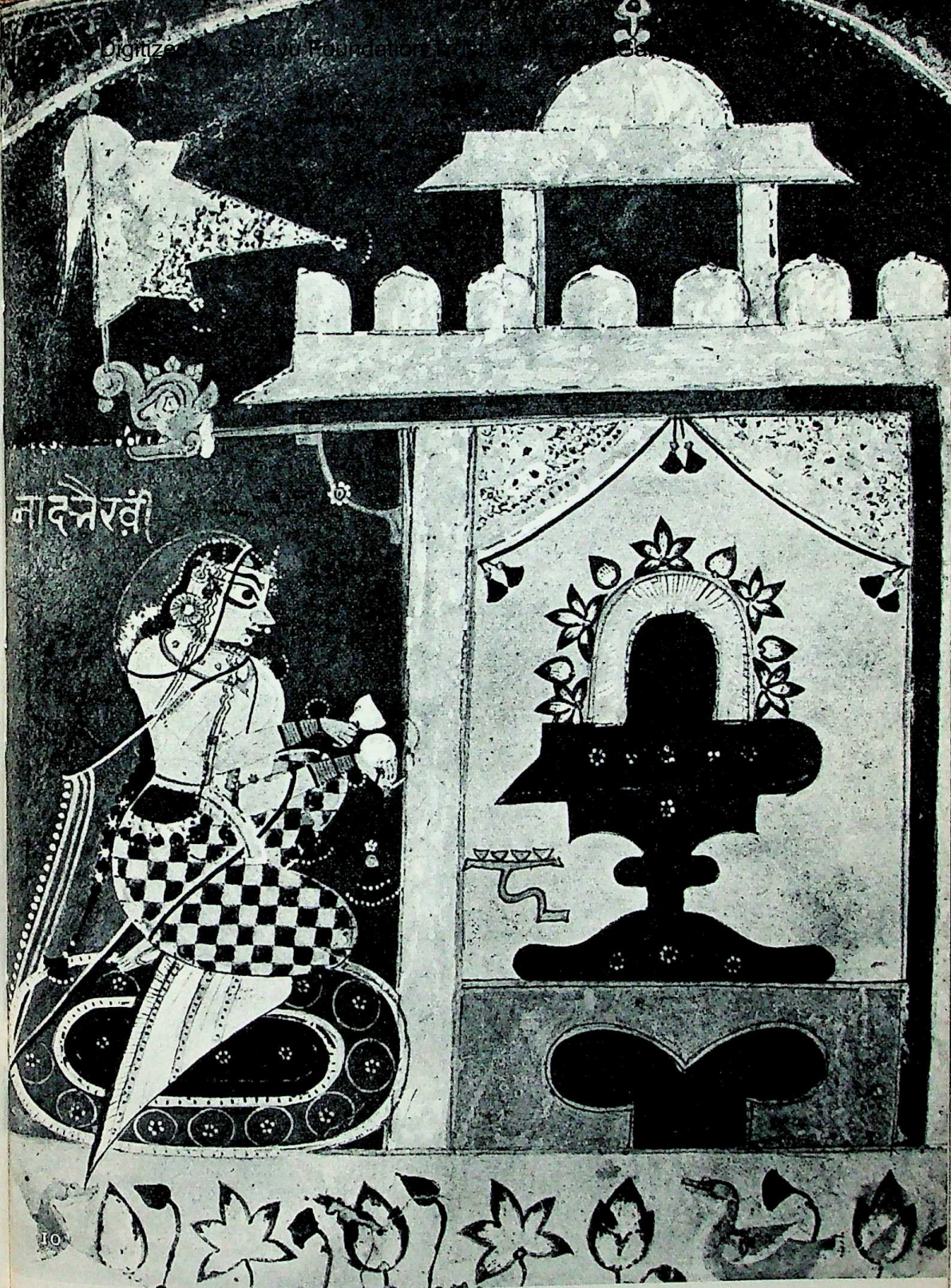
7

7 SIVA NATARAJA Siva, Lord of the Dance, portrays the universal equilibrium of creation and destruction. South India. c. 11th century A.D.
CC-0. In Public Domain. UP State Museum, Hazratganj. Lucknow

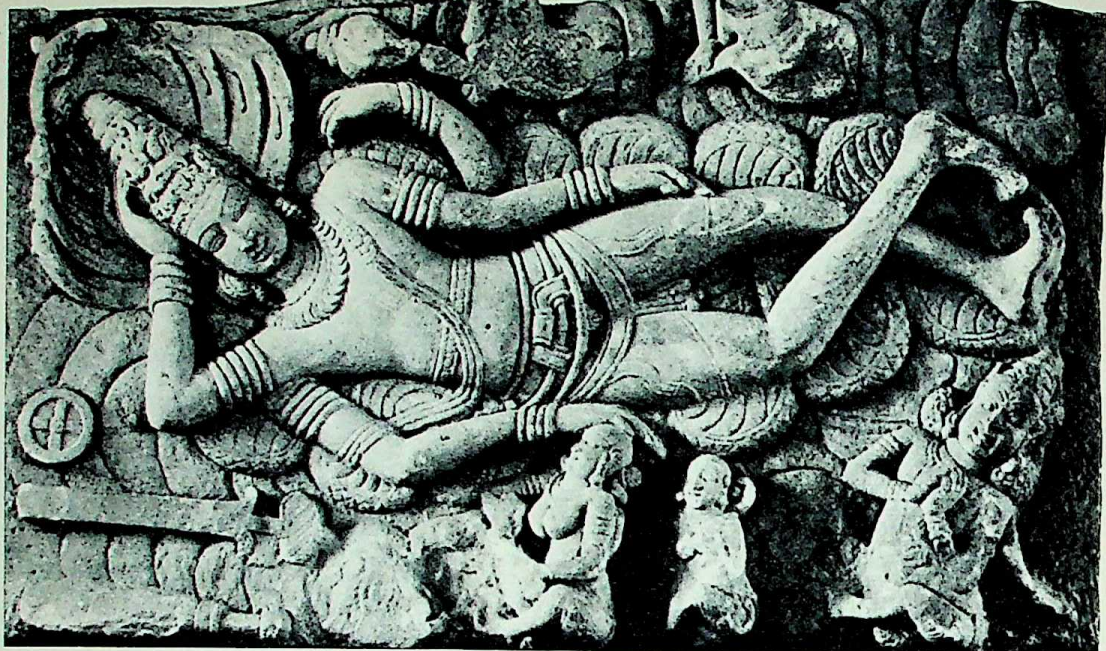


8 SIVA ARDHANARI The hermaphrodite form of Siva represents the essential duality of the Universe. Mathura. c. 3rd century A.D.

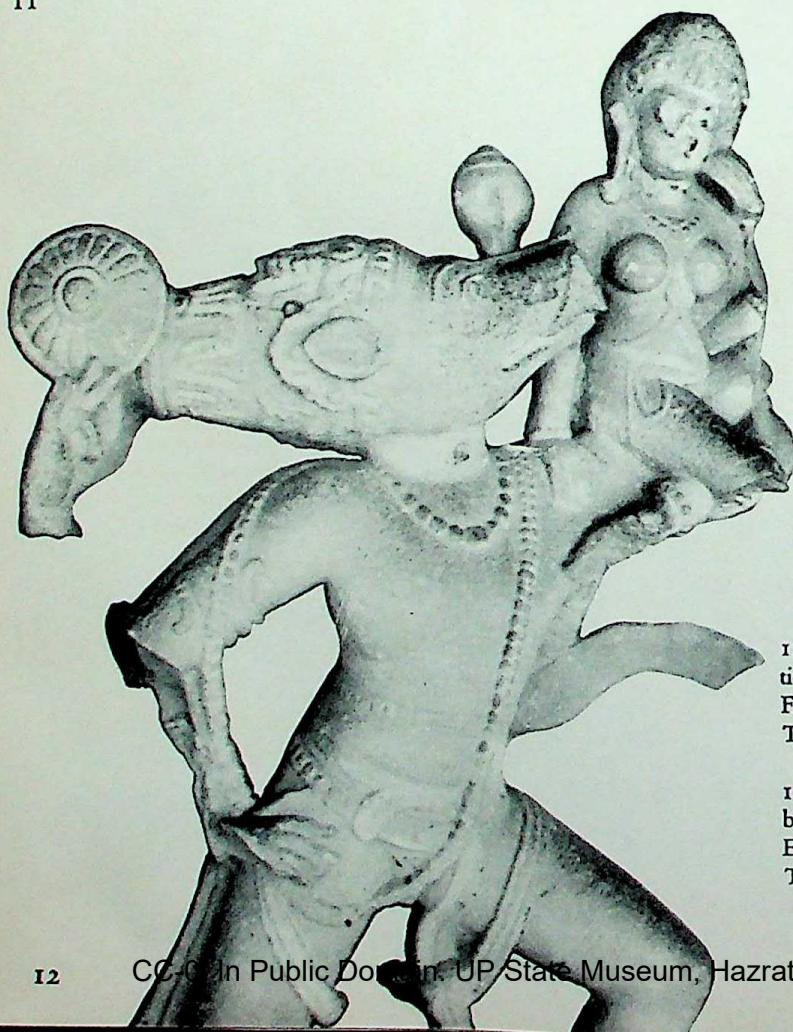
9 LINGA TEMPLE at Tanjore. The phallus is an iconic form of Siva, and also represents the cosmic vital force. Here, the *linga* commemorate the sixty-three Tamil saints. c. A.D. 1000



10 LINGA WORSHIP Painting from Mandu, Central India. c. A.D. 1550

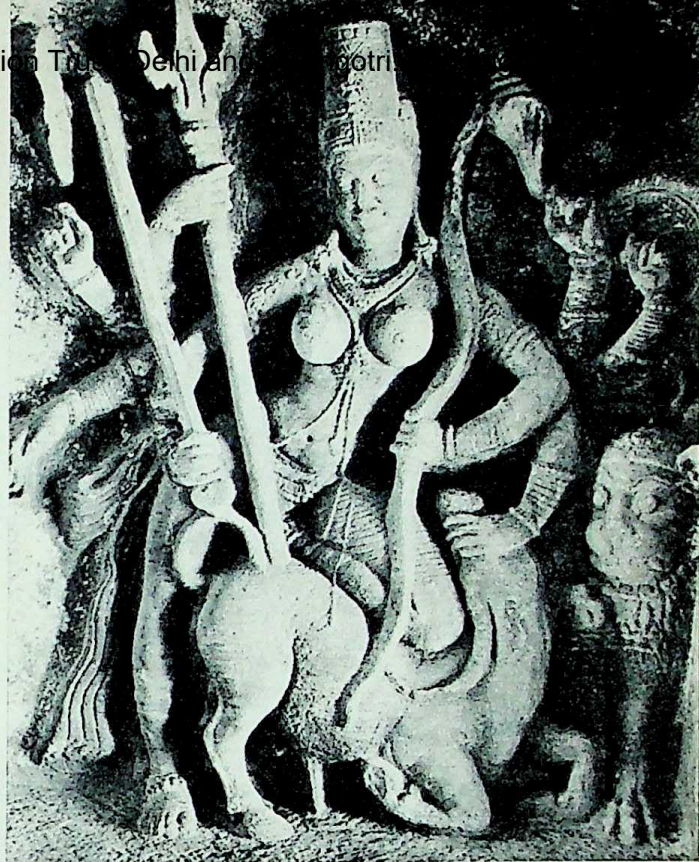


II



II VISHNU sleeps the sleep of creation, lying upon the serpent Ananta. From his navel, lotus-borne, arose the Trinity. Aihole. 6th century A.D.

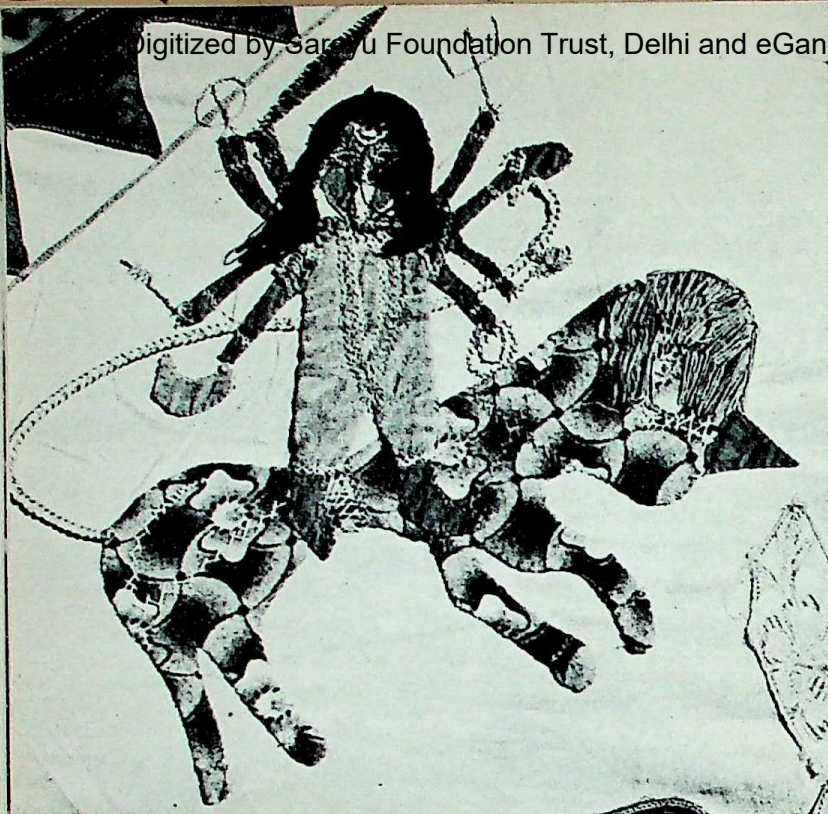
12 VISHNU incarnate as a man-boar (one of ten incarnations) rescues Earth from the cosmic flood. Durga Temple, Aihole. 8th century A.D.



DEVI, the Goddess represents the *shakti* or cosmic energy of Shiva. She has two characters, one mild and the other fierce and it is in the latter form that she is mainly worshipped. In Hindu ideas the god is the personification of that passive aspect that is known in the West as Eternity; the goddess, its apparent opposite, the activating energy that is creative power. The noun *shakti* comes from the root *shak* meaning 'to be able, to be possible'

13 DURGA the Goddess in her terrible aspect, slays the demon in buffalo form. Aihole. 6th century A.D.

14 In her benign and gracious aspect, she is PARVATI, the wife of Siva. Bronze. South India. 15th century A.D.

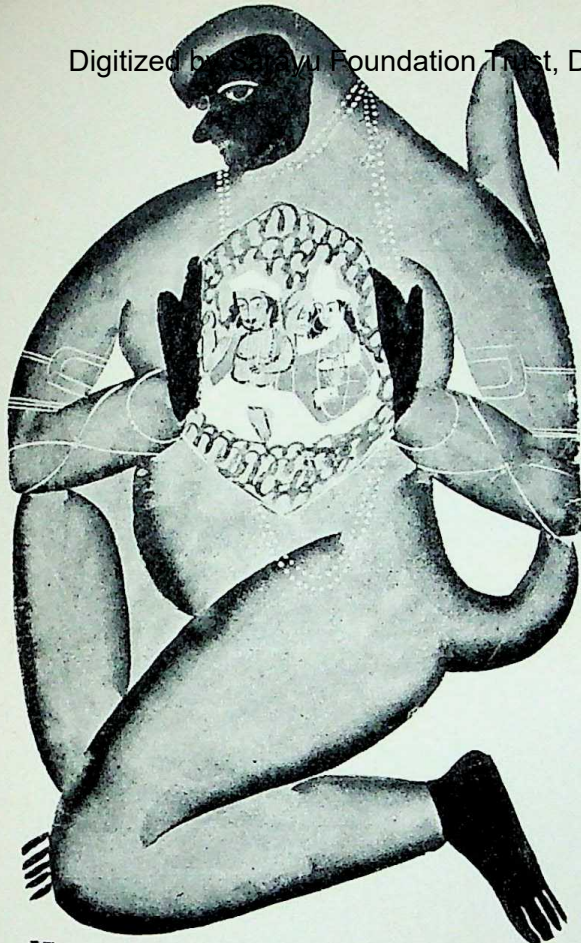


15

15 KALI, another terrible aspect of the Goddess, here shown riding on her lion, which can also be seen in the background of the sculpture on the preceding page. Appliqué banner. Kumaon Hills. 20th century A.D.

16 THE INFANT KRISHNA (Balakrishna). Bronze. South India. 18th century A.D. As a result of confusion with the infant Jesus at Mombasa, Vasco da Gama was persuaded of the essentially Christian nature of Hinduism





17

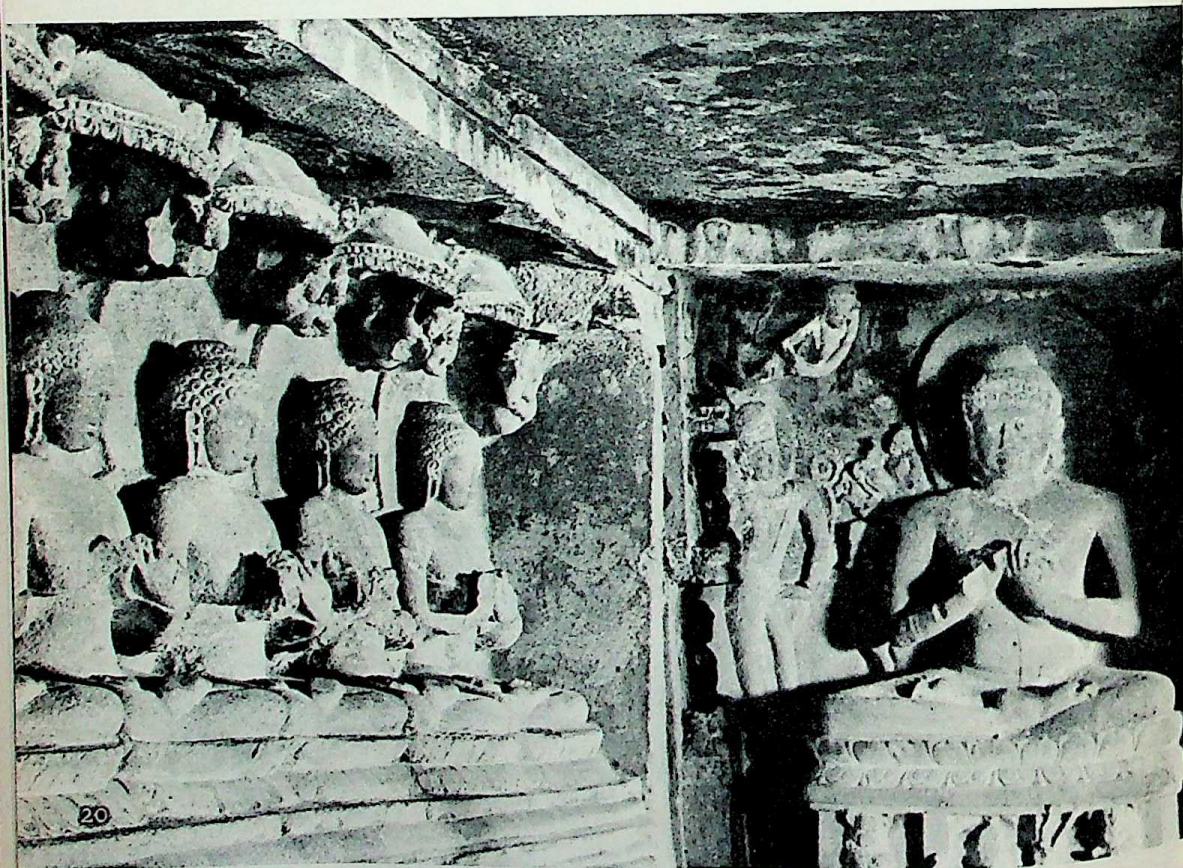
17 HANUMAN was the Monkey General who aided Rama in recovering Sita from the demon Ravana, as described in the *Ramayana*. In this painting, Rama and Sita are enshrined in his heart. Calcutta Bazaar School. Late 19th century

18 GANESHA is the elephant-headed son of Siva, the god who overcomes obstacles and presides over the beginnings of all actions. Hoysalesvara Temple, Halebid. Middle 12th century A.D.





19 DEATH OF THE BUDDHA Indo-Alexandrian style. Gandhara. 2nd-4th century A.D.



20 THE BUDDHA the Enlightened One, preaching to his disciples. Tintal Cave, Ellura. c. A.D. 700

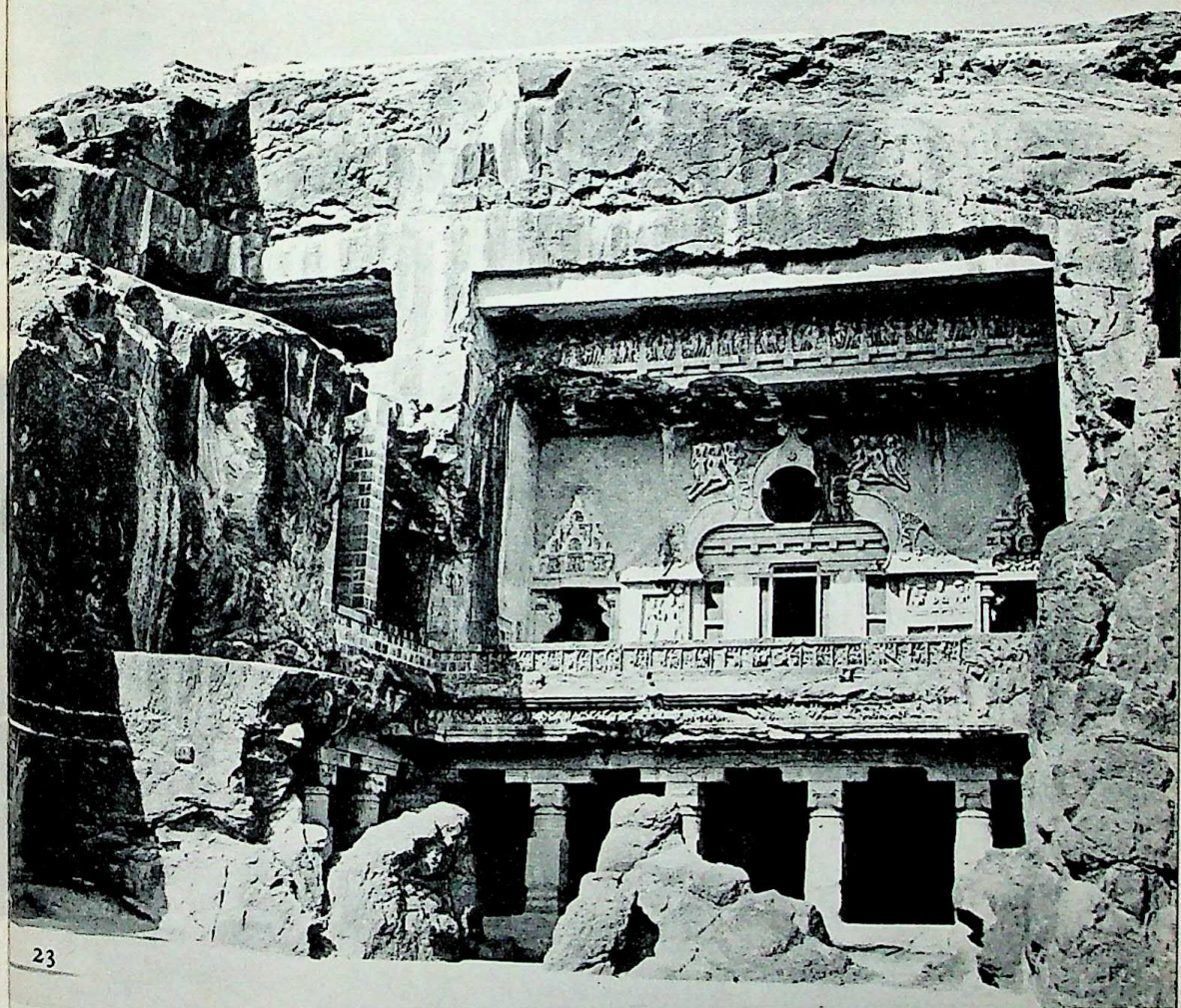


21 JINA Mahavira, the Victorious One, founder of Jainism. Badami. 6th century A.D.



22 A SELLER OF RELIGIOUS PRINTS Hyderabad, Deccan. 20th century A.D.

Houses of Gods and Men



23

23 ELLURA Visvakarma Cave. Visvakarma is the Divine Architect of the Hindu pantheon. 8th century A.D.

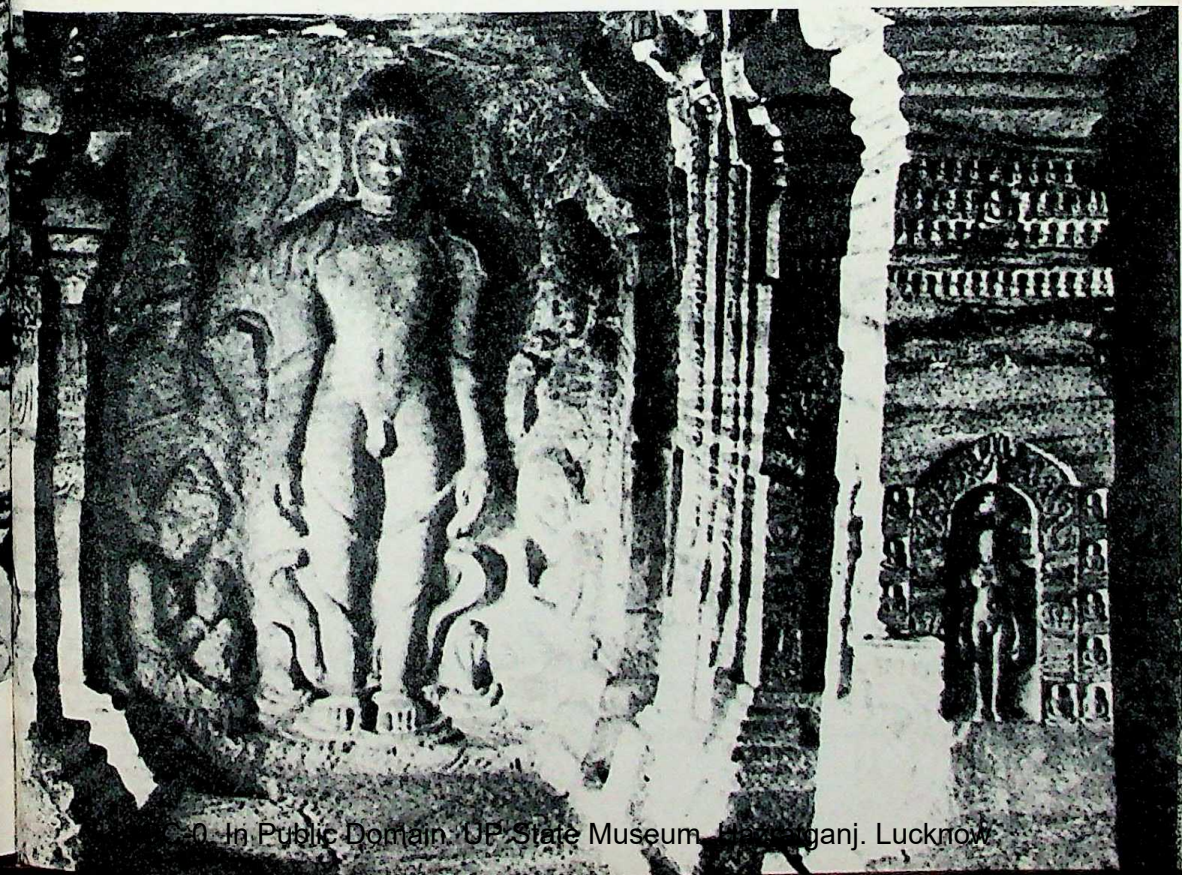


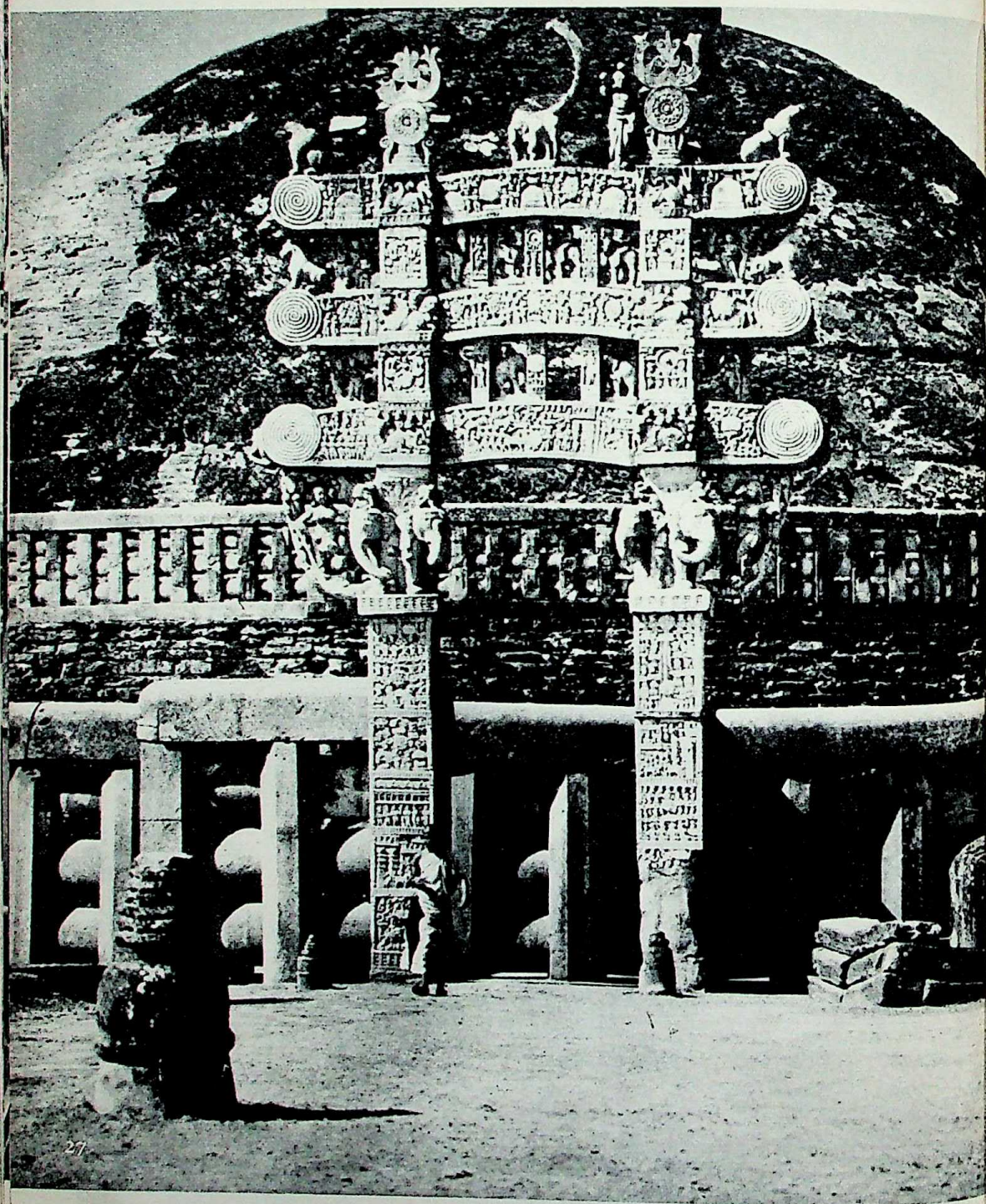
24 BADAMI The Temple of Malagitti Sivalaya. 6th century A.D.



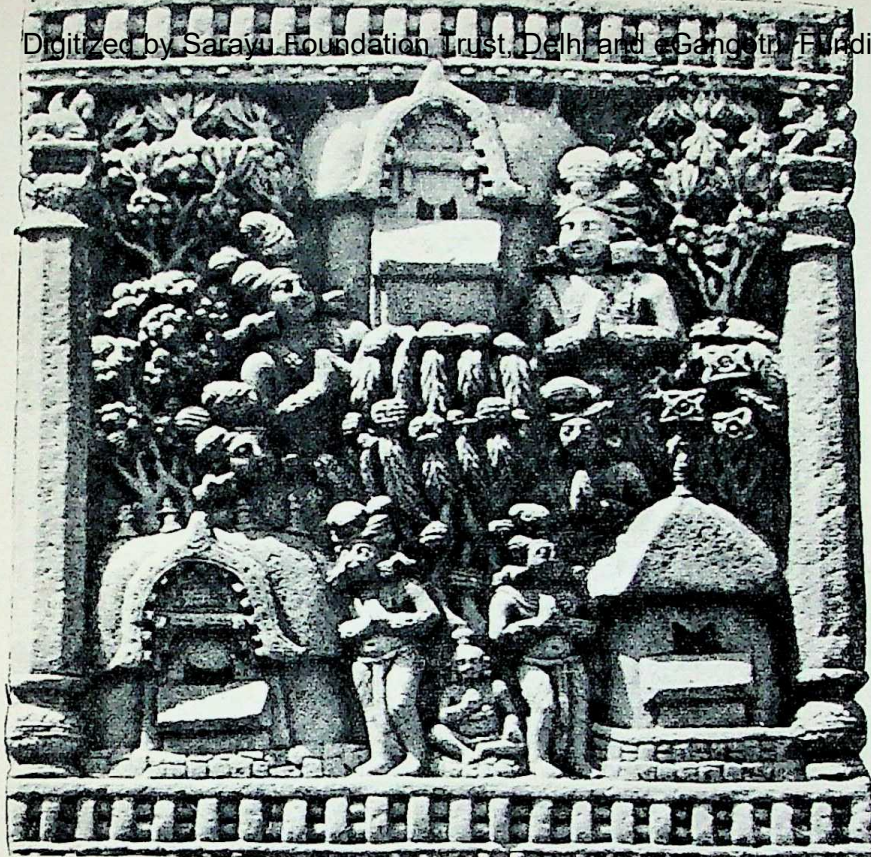
25 AJANTA The Buddhist paintings at Ajanta reflect a luxurious, aristocratic culture. The Bodhisattva is no longer an ascetic, but a prince. Detail from a fresco of one of the *Jatakas* or birth-stories. Cave I. 6th century A.D.

26 BADAMI Jina Cave Temple. 6th century A.D. Nakedness is characteristic of the Jinas





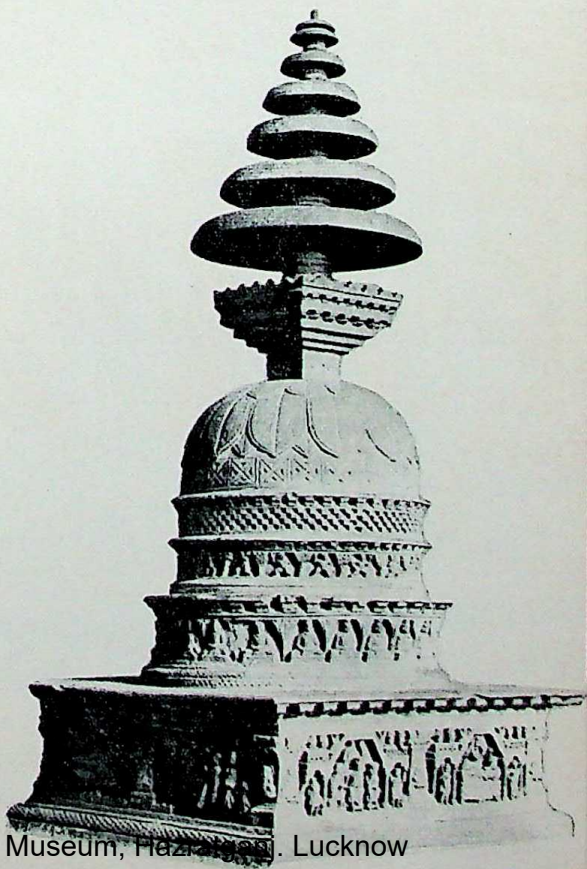
27 SANCHI North gateway, Great Stupa. 1st century B.C. to 1st century A.D.
The stupa is essentially a relic chamber, to be circumambulated by the faithful

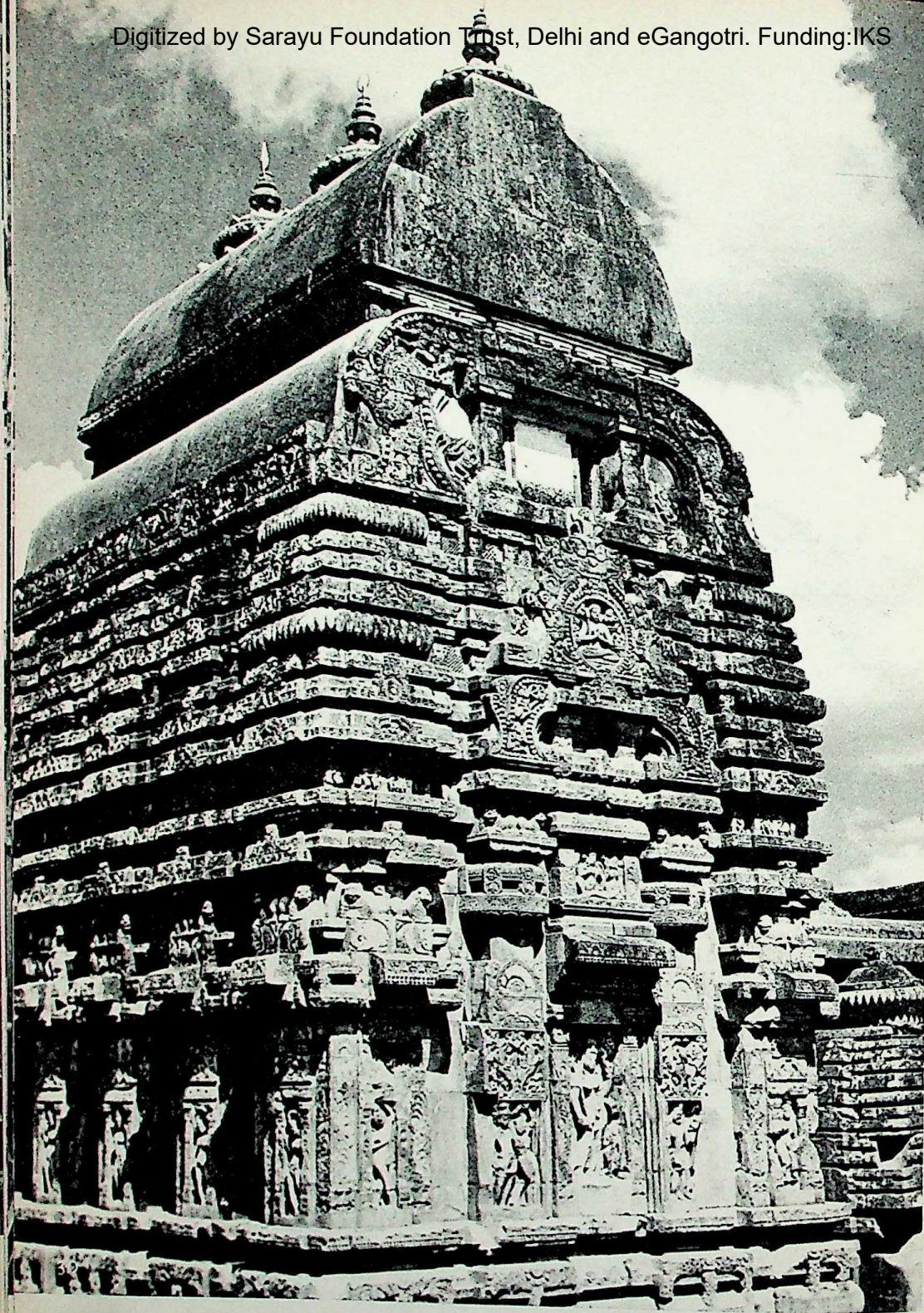


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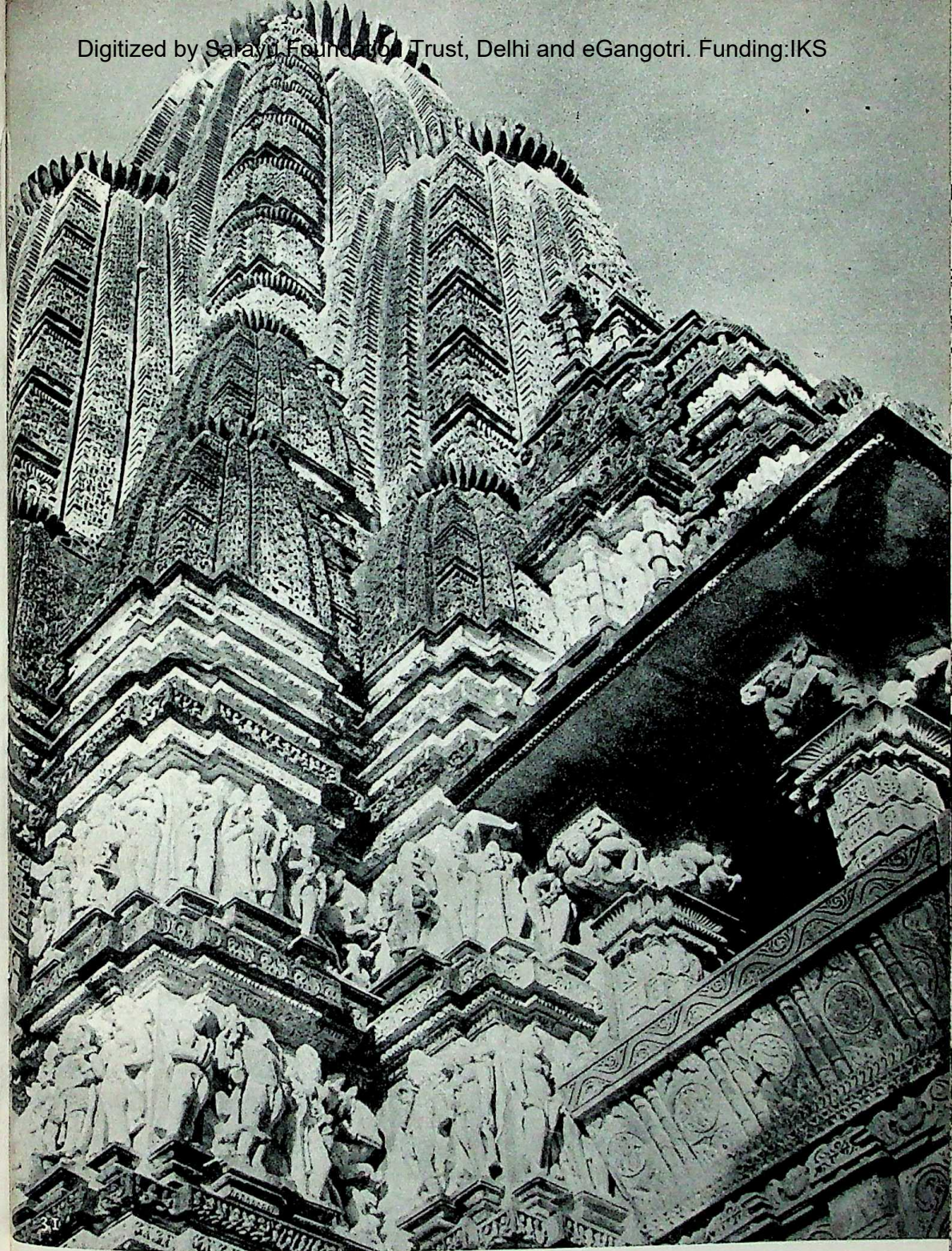
28 SANCHI The same gateway, a detail. This scene, a religious one, furnishes valuable information about the domestic architecture of the Sungas

29 THE SWAT VALLEY A Buddhist votive object in the form of a stupa. 5th century A.D.

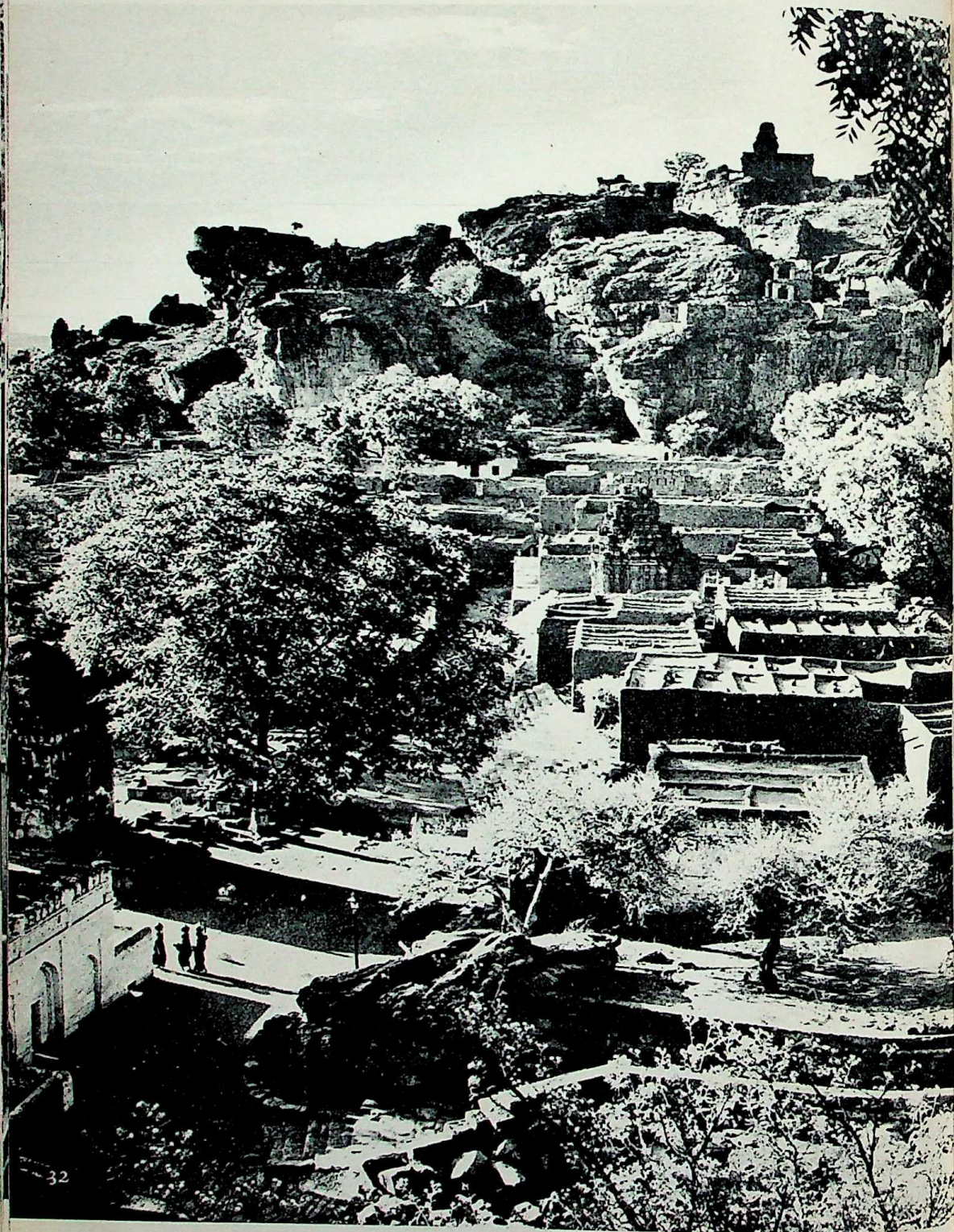




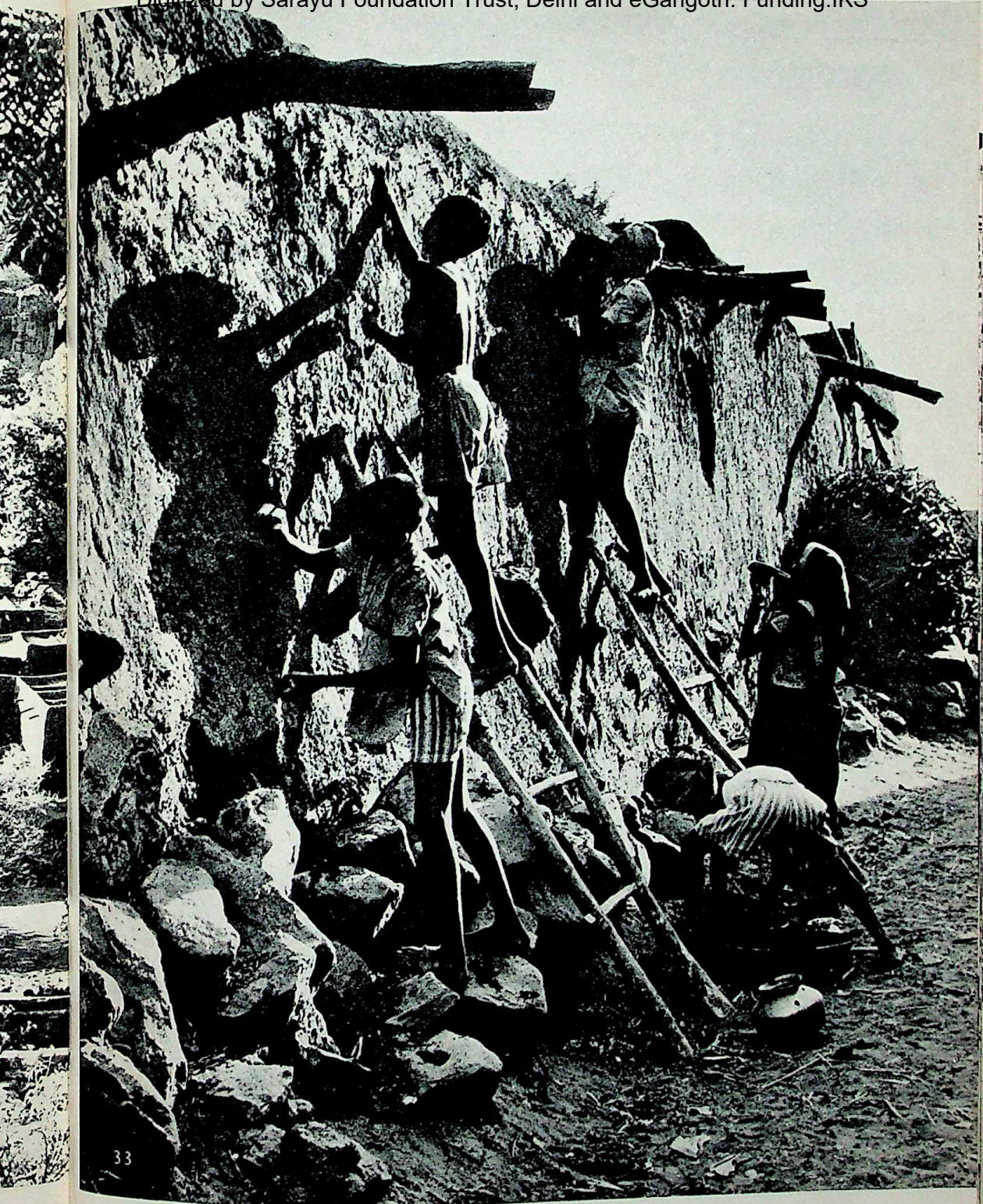
30 BHUBANESWAR The Temple of Baital Deul. 9th century A.D. A Siva temple dedicated to the god as Lord of the Three Worlds—Heaven, Earth and Underworld



31 KHAJURAHO Visvanath Temple. Visvanath, 'Lord of All', is one of the names of Siva. 11th century A.D.



32 BADAMI The village today, with the Temple of Malagitti Sivalaya, on the hill (plate 24)



33

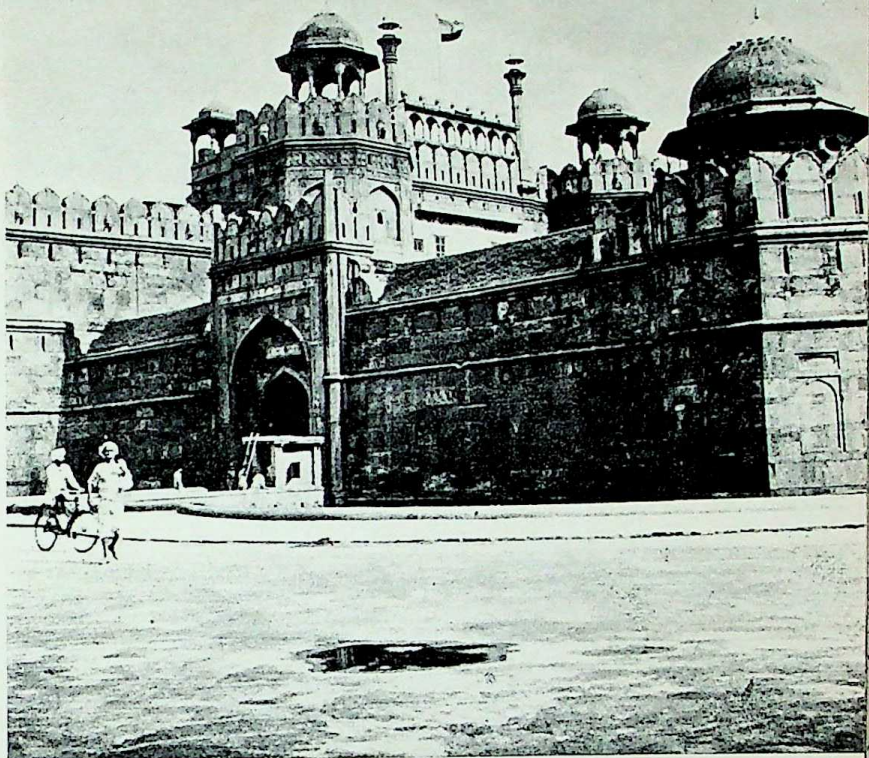
33 VILLAGE INDIA Resurfacing a mud and cow-dung wall. 20th century A.D.



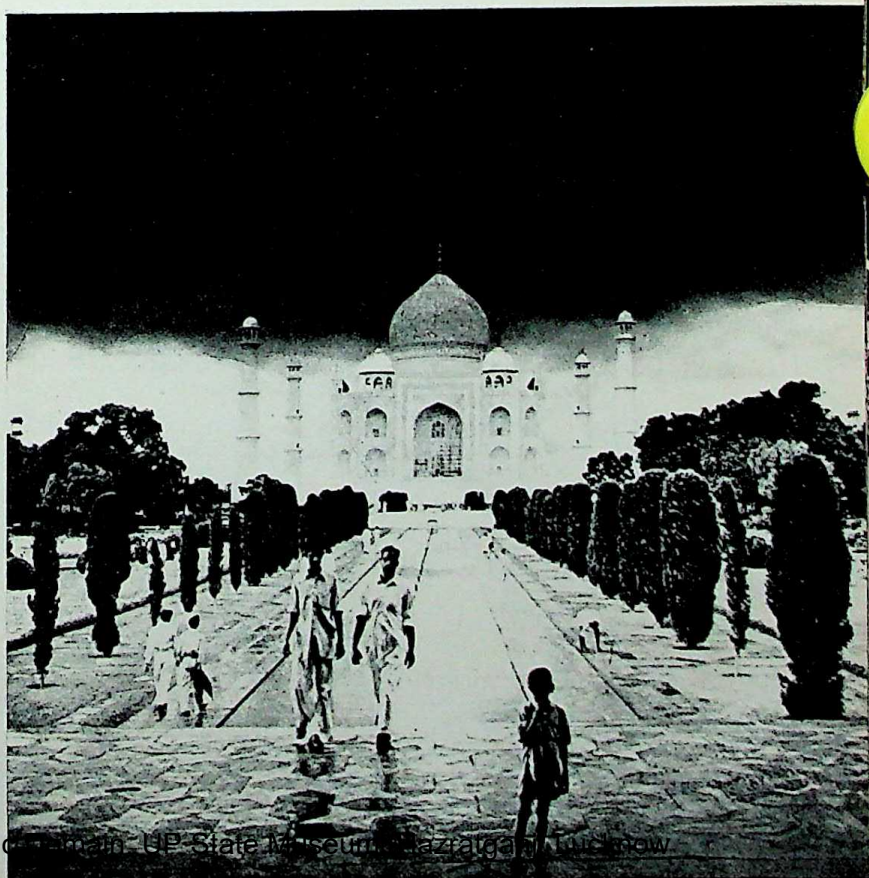
35 DELHI The Red Fort
c. 1650. On the cornices
of the Hall of Private
Audience, Shah Jahan had
incised the couplet

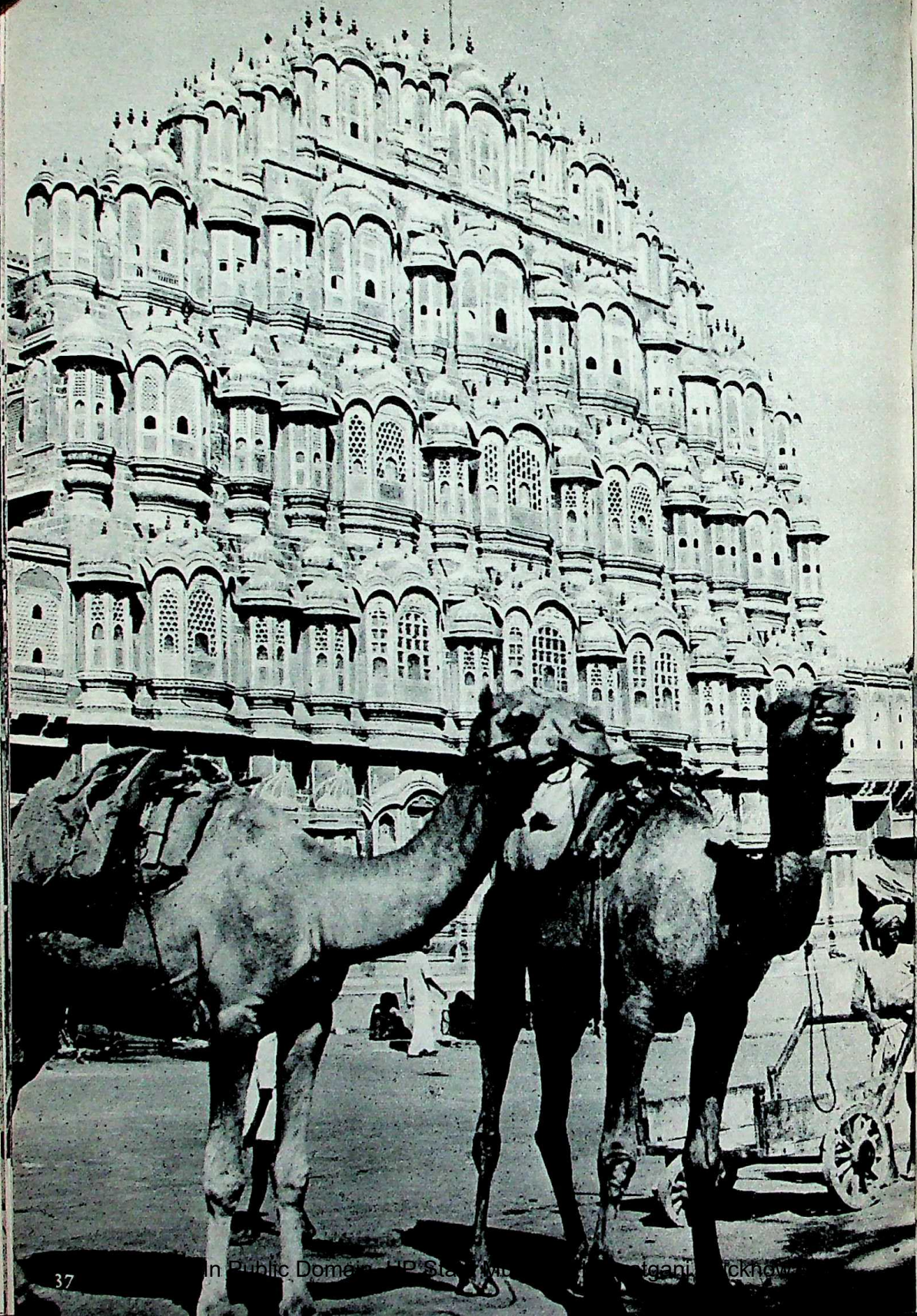
*agar firdaus bar ruyi zamin ast
hamin ast, hamin ast, hamin ast!*
(If on earth be an Eden of
Bliss
It is this, it is this, it is this)

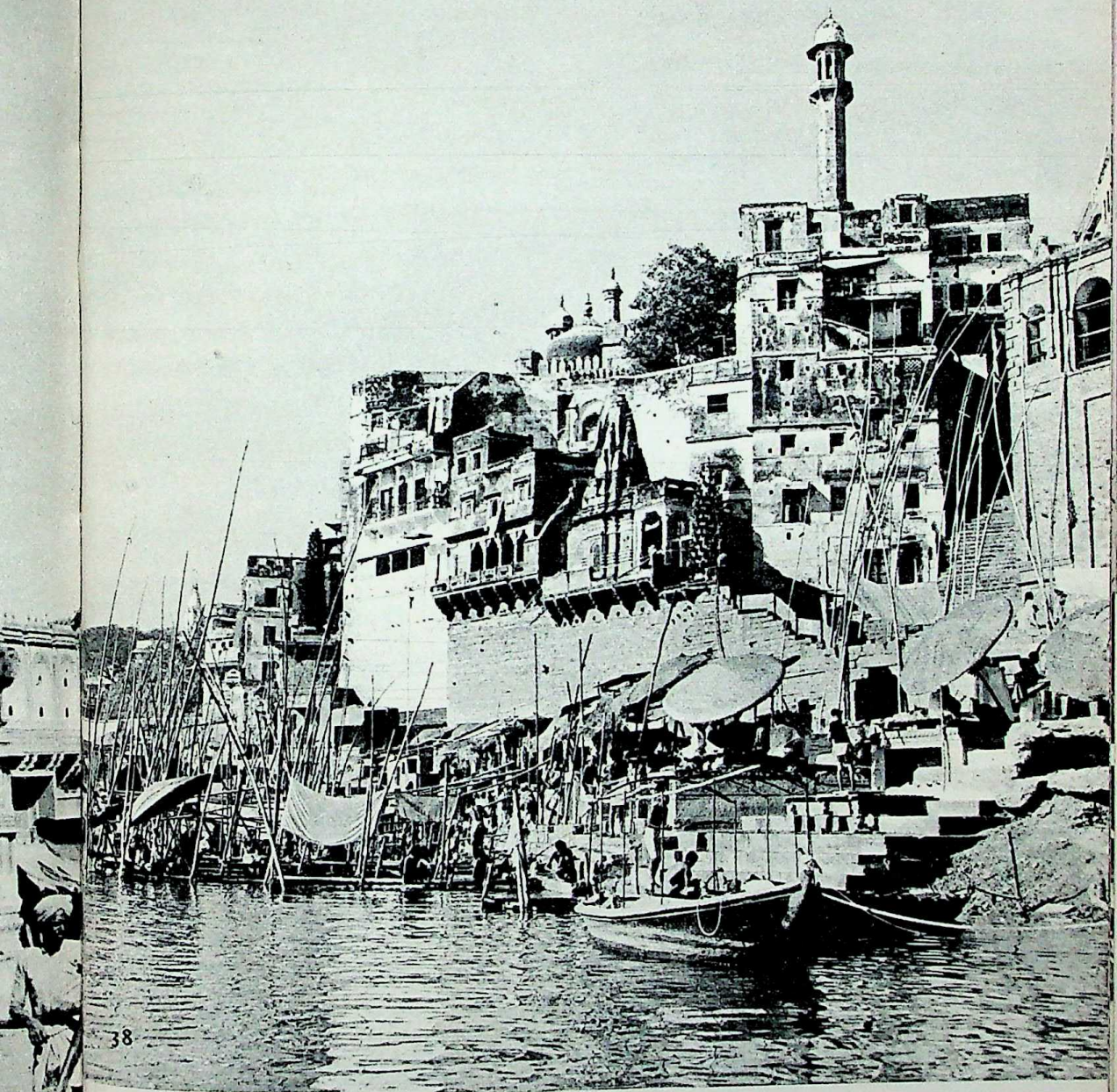
35



36 AGRA The Taj Mahal.
Built as a tomb for his wife
Mumtaz Mahal, by the
Emperor Shah Jahan.
1632-47

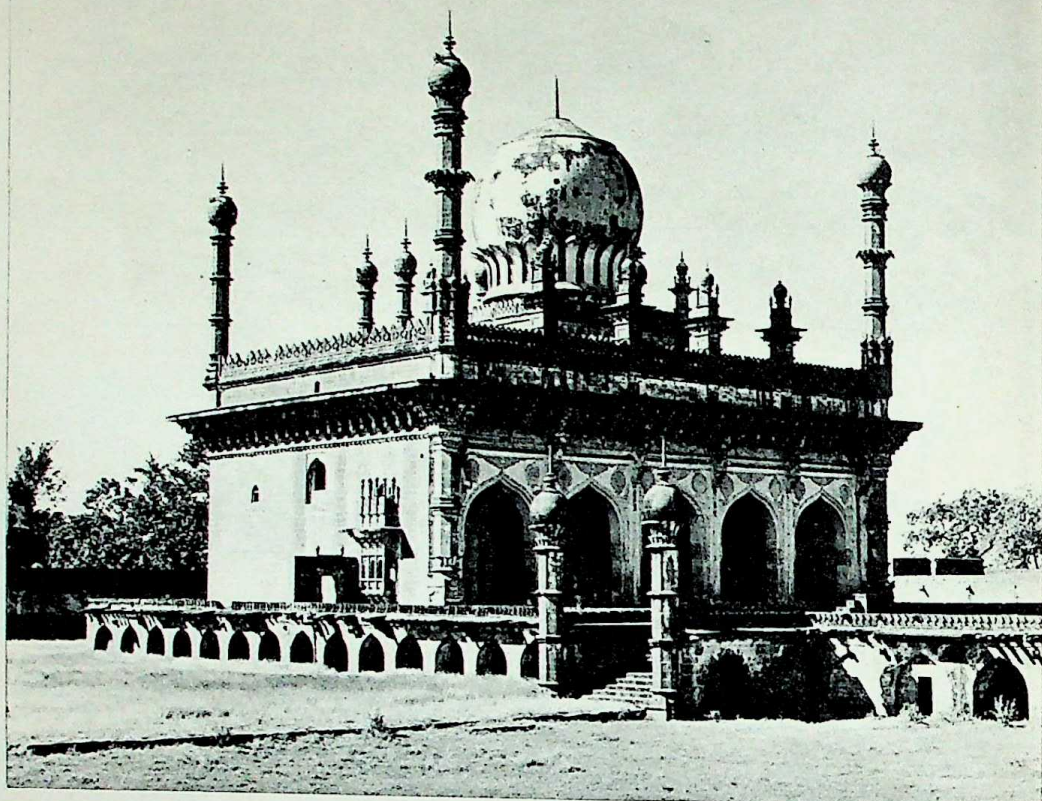




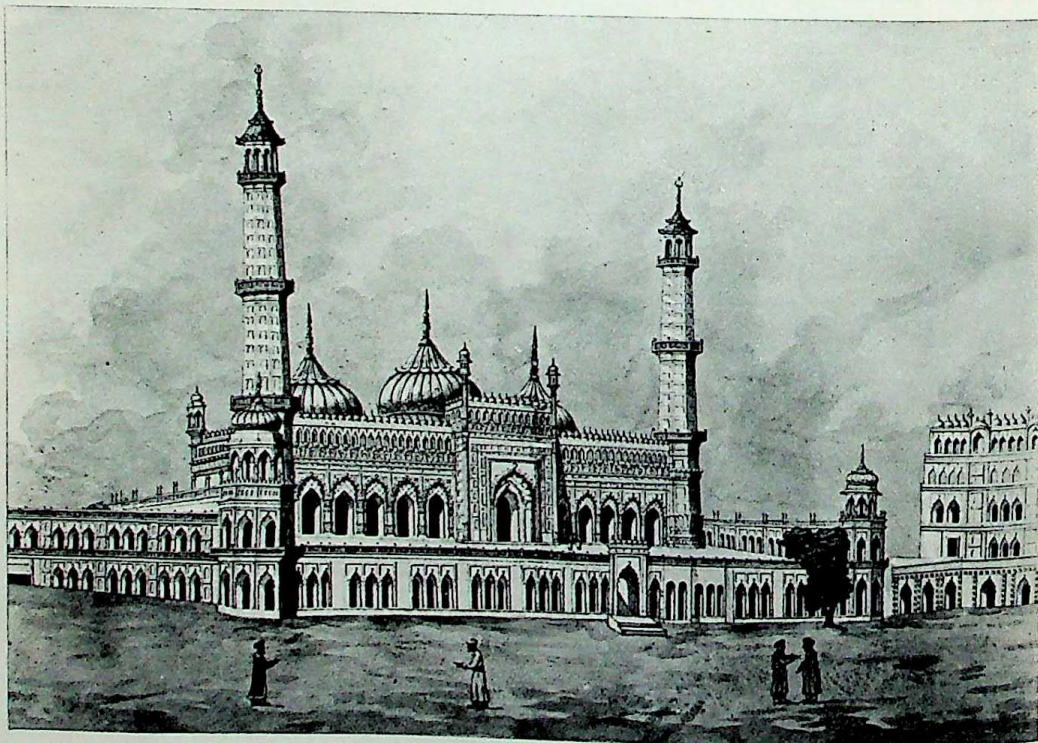


38 BENARES Aurangzeb's mosque, 'incongruously, the landmark of the city', which is the principal holy place of Hinduism. c. A.D. 1669

37 JAIPUR Hawa Mahal ('Hall of Winds'). 18th century A.D.



39

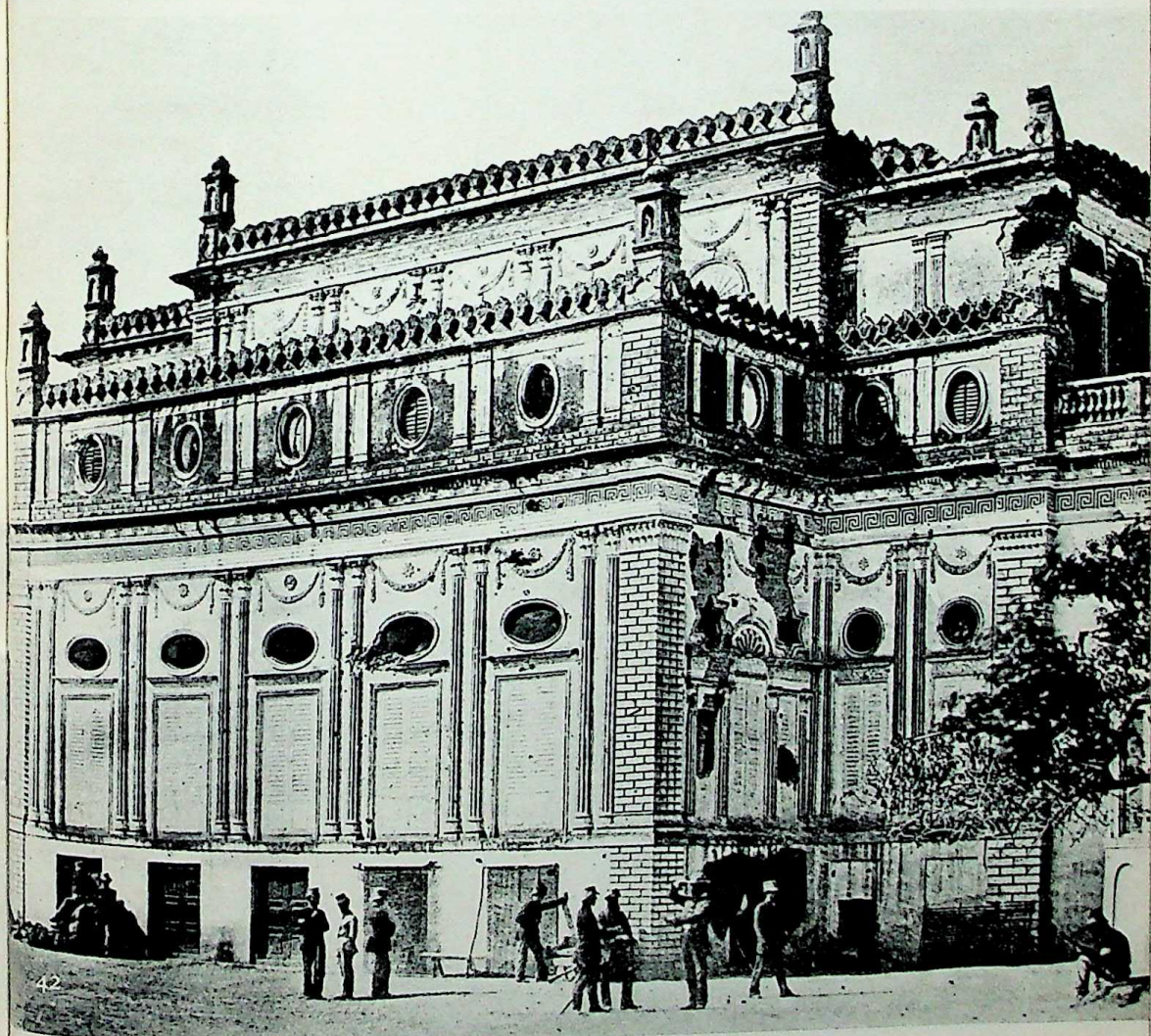


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39 BIJAPUR Tomb of the Sultan Ibrahim II. A.D. 1615

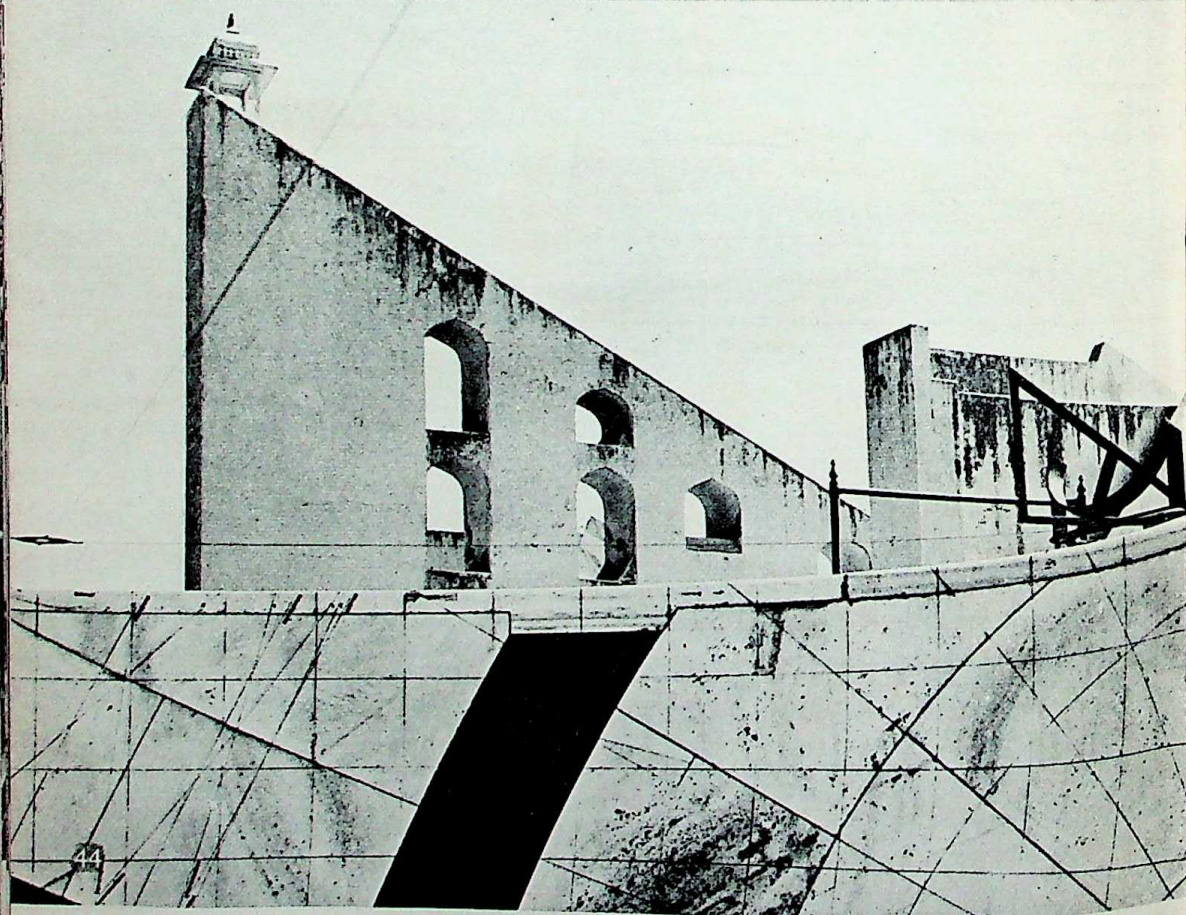
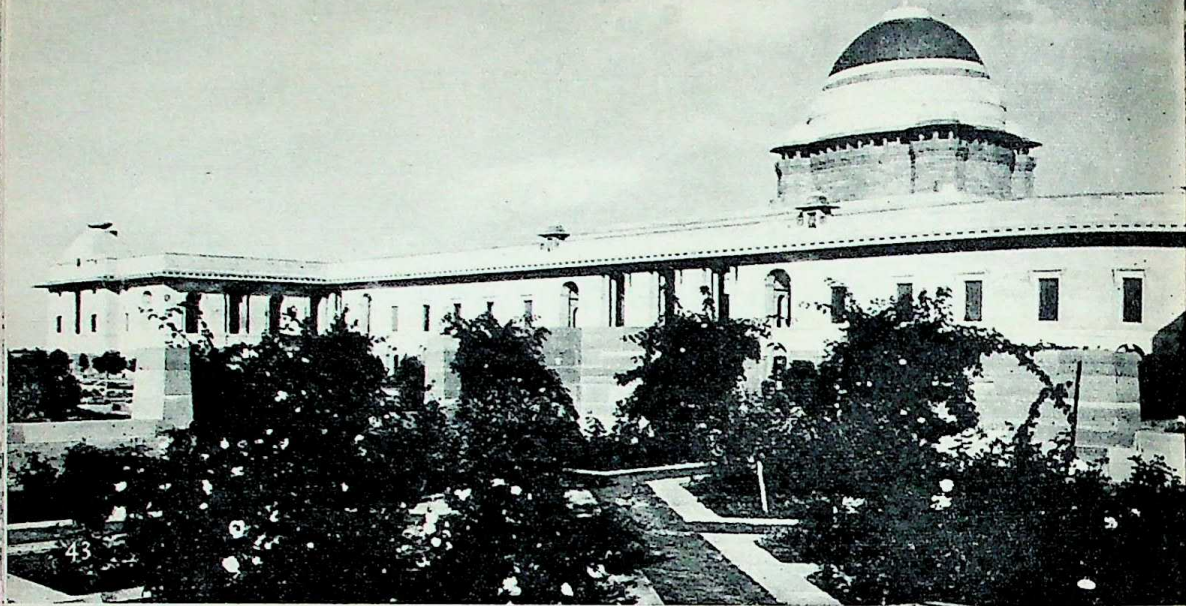
40 LUCKNOW Mosque of the tomb of the Nawab Asaf-ud-daula. A.D. 1784

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41 CALCUTTA The Classical Front of the British in India. Early 19th century

42 LUCKNOW The Begum Koti in 1858. (This is one of the earliest photographs taken in India, and belongs to the war correspondence of the Indian Mutiny)



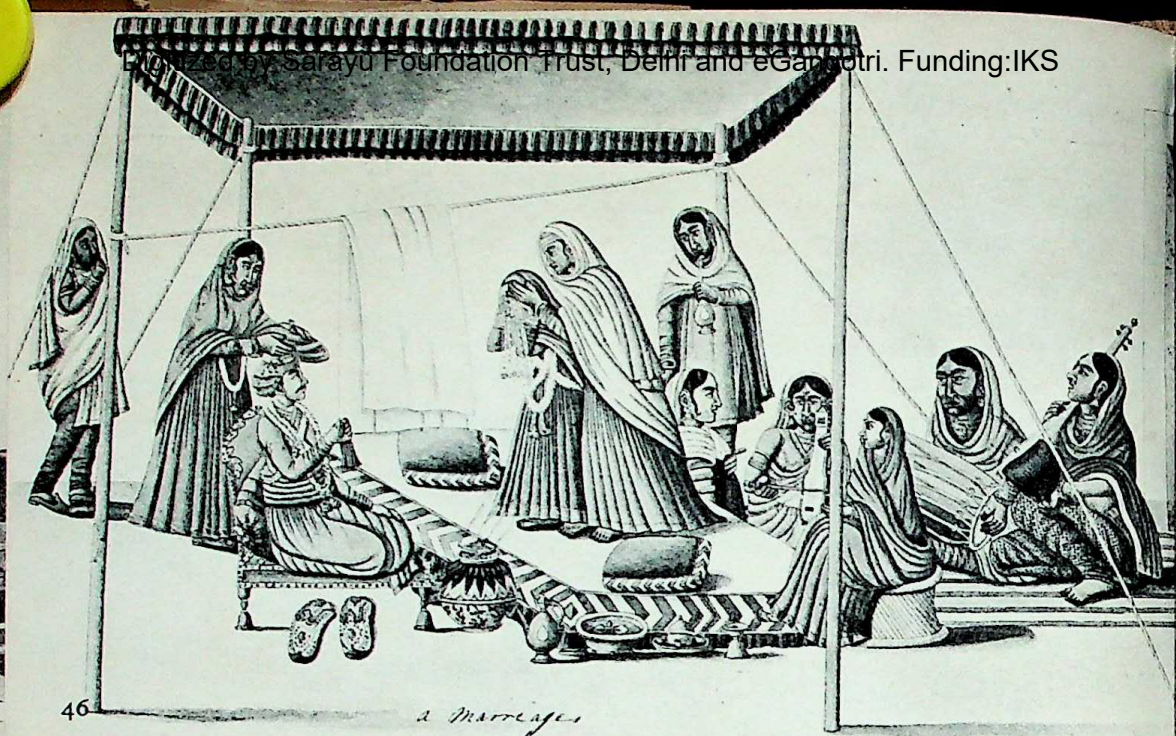
43 NEW DELHI Imperial ostentation. Viceroy's House A.D. 1930. Architect, Sir Edward Lutyens. Now President's House, Republic of India

Life in Village and Town



45 DIWALI, THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS Diwali is held in October–November, and heralds the winter. Houses are whitewashed and furniture renovated. Lights are lit in the evening, originally to keep away death. The financial year ends, and prayers for success and prosperity are offered to Lakshmi, goddess of wealth

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FERTILITY AND DEATH

46 A MUSLIM MARRIAGE
From an album of drawings
made in Lucknow for Lord
Wellesley (Governor-General
1798-1805) c. 1800

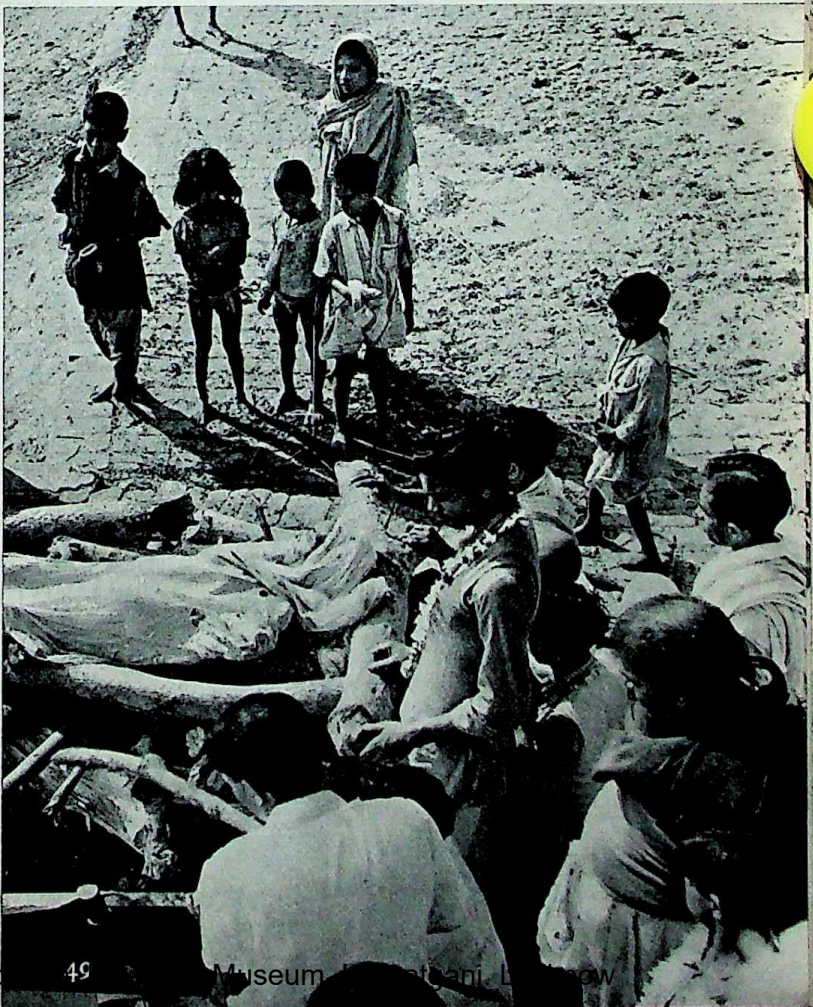
47 A MUSLIM BURIAL The
Muslims bury their dead, anoint-
ing with camphor the hands and
feet, knees and forehead—those
parts which daily touch the ground
in prayer. The body is wrapped in
a shroud of white cloth and placed
in a coffin, though the corpse is
buried only in the shroud



48

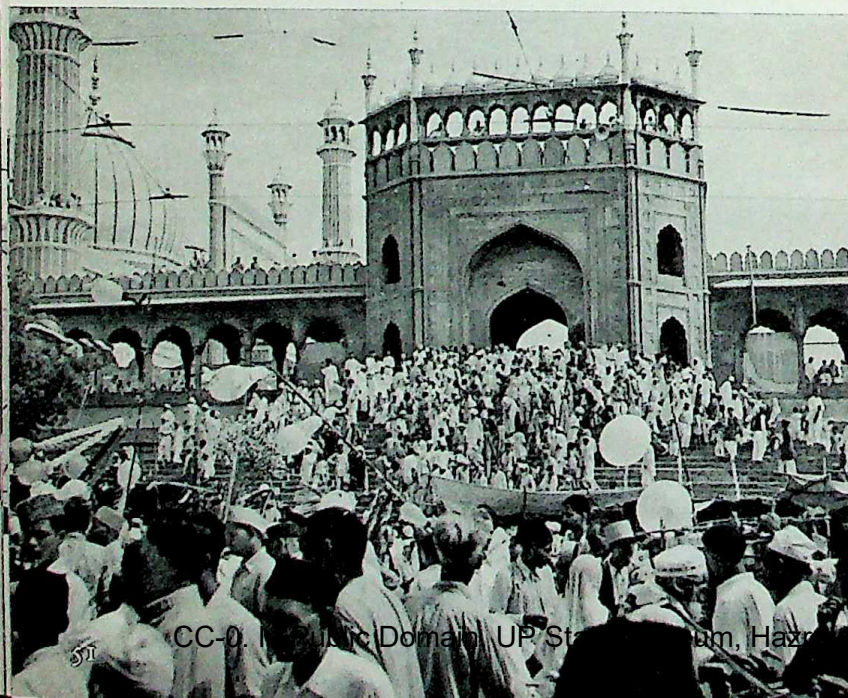
48 THE FESTIVAL OF HOLI
A fertility rite, Holi has sometimes been called the Hindu saturnalia. Held in February–March, it is a spring festival, and passers-by are squirted with coloured water and smeared with coloured powder

49 AT THE BURNING GHAT
Hindus burn their dead on a funeral pyre on the bank of a river. Benares, on the banks of the sacred river Ganges, is the most auspicious place to die in India. Here an old woman awaits cremation. Children gaze at the white-shrouded corpse without emotion, for the realities of life and death are neither romanticized nor concealed from them





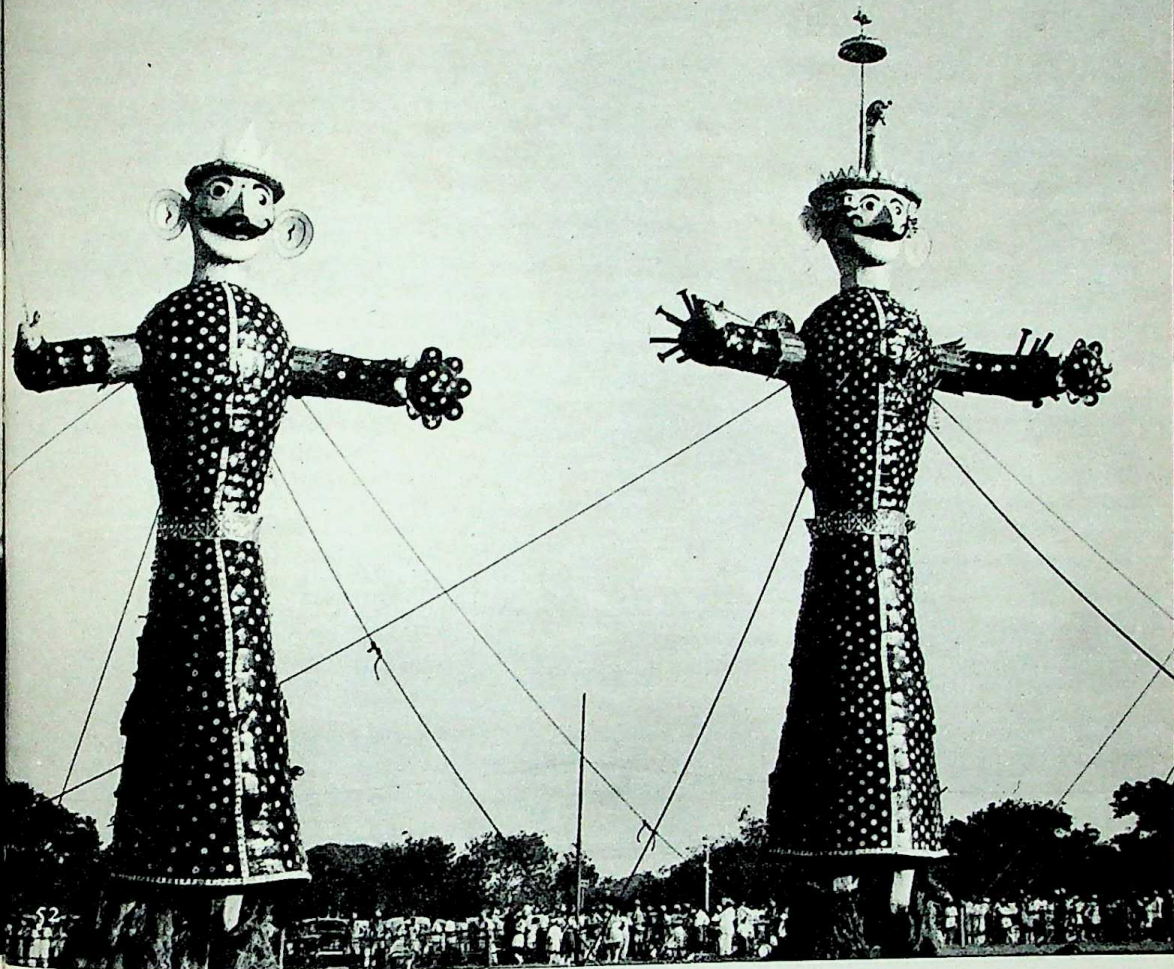
50



EXPRESSIONS OF FAITH

50 SIKH The *Granth Sahib*, the Sikh Bible, is carried at the swearing-in of Sikh recruits to the Indian Army

51 MUSLIM At the mosque of the Jama Masjid in Delhi, built by Shah Jahan, Muslims crowd to prayer at the festival of Id-ul-Fitr which marks the end of the feast of Ramadan



FAITH

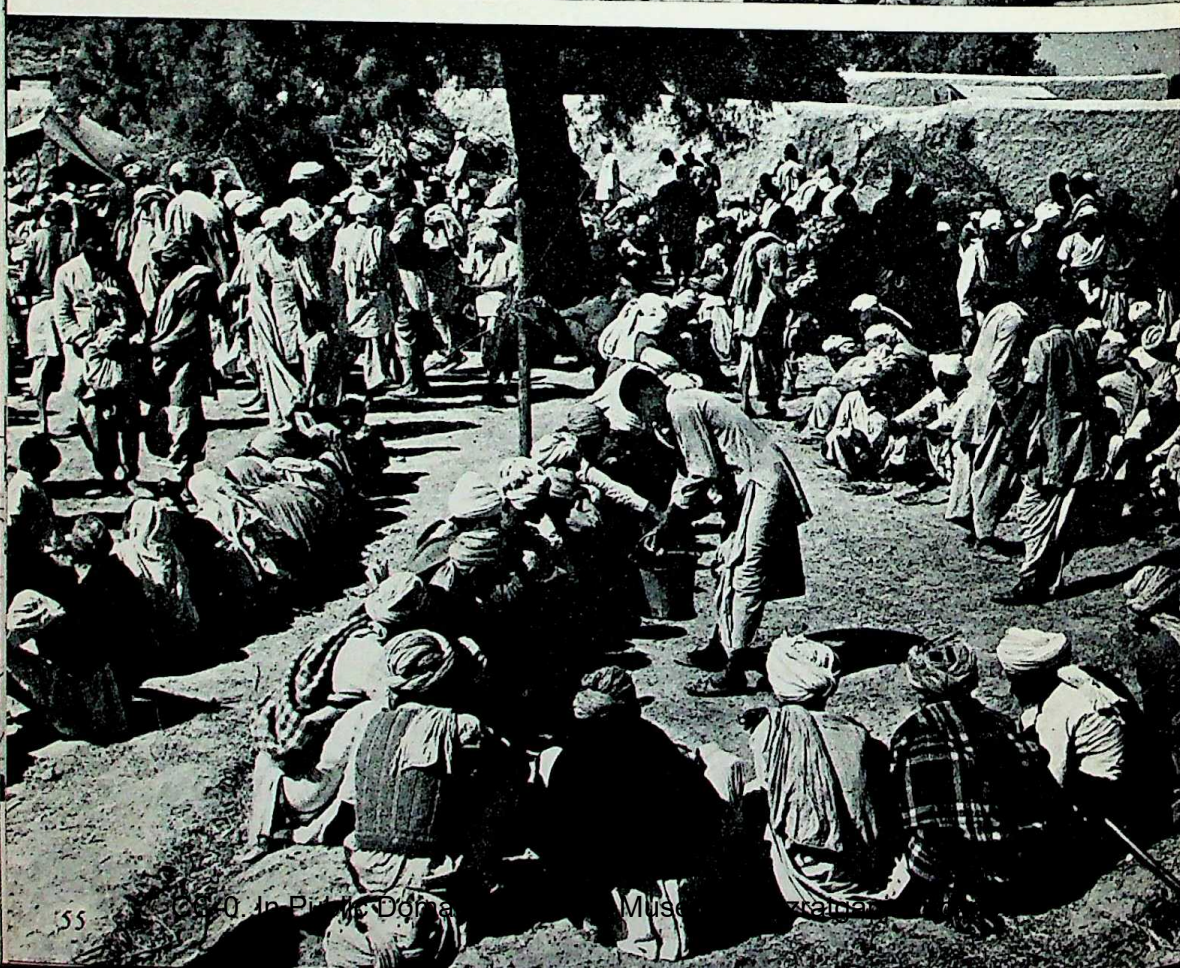
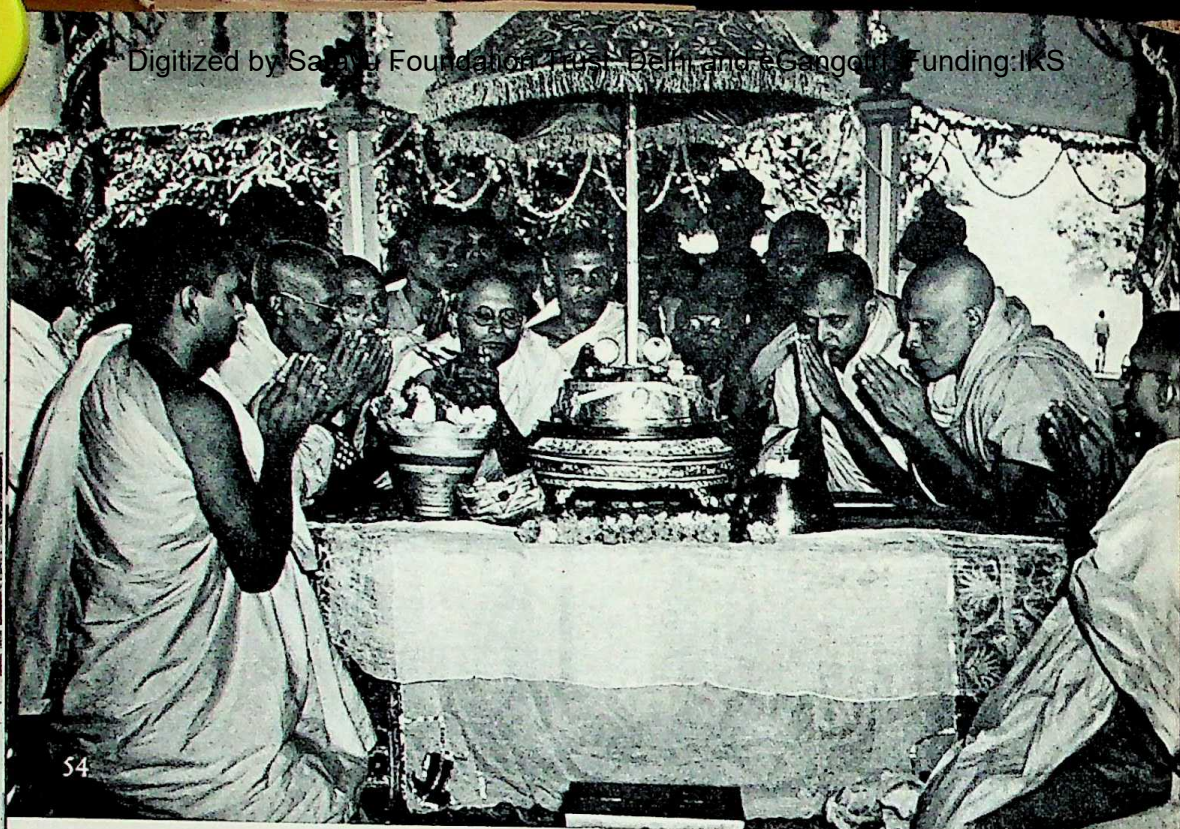
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52 **HINDU** The Festival of Dussehra. This ten-day festival, held in September–October, commemorates the victory of Rama, the hero of the *Ramayana*, over the demon Ravana. In northern India (here, at Delhi) effigies of Ravana and his minions are burnt to symbolize the destruction of evil

53 In the south, at Mysore, a colourful and varied procession ends the festival. Here, an elegant European carriage is drawn by richly caparisoned bullocks







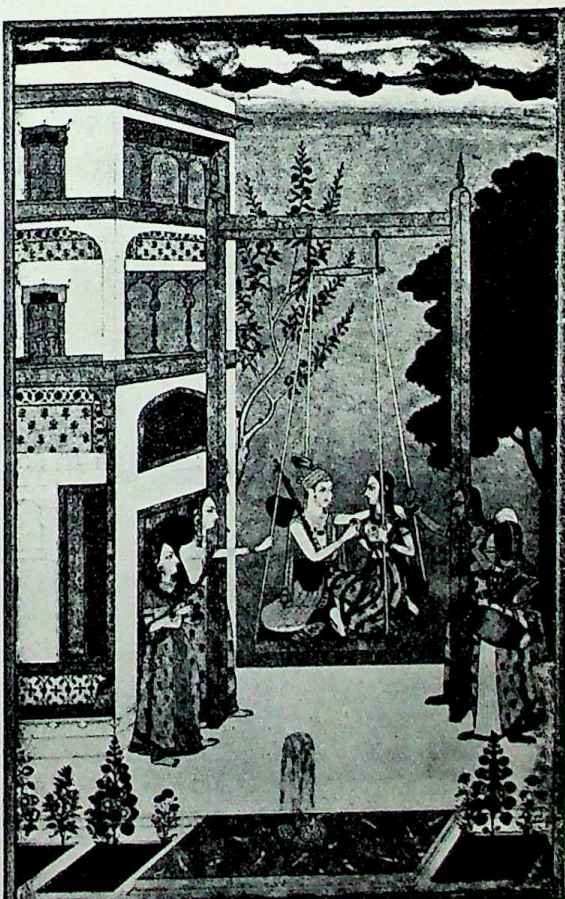
54 **BUDDHIST** Relics of Sariputta and Moggallana, disciples of Gautama Buddha, returned to India in 1952. Buddhist monks pay homage to the relics before their enshrinement at Sanchi

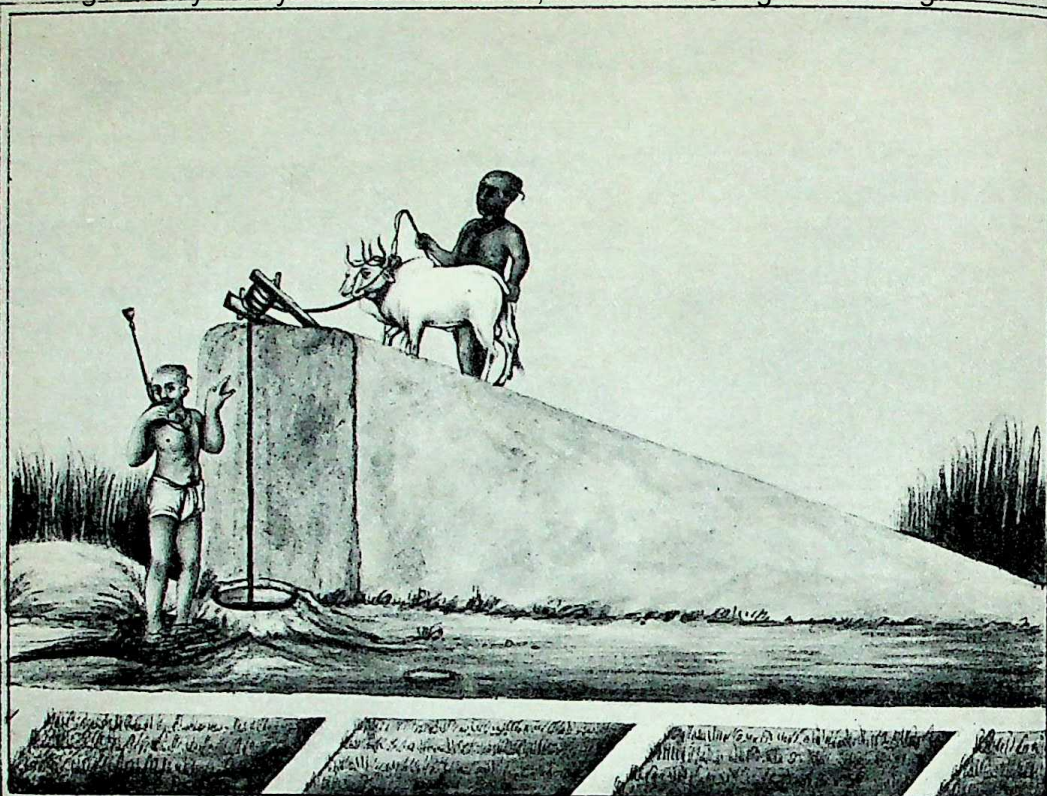
55 A VILLAGE FEAST

LUXE PRIVÉ

56 The European in India, before the puritan reforms of the evangelicals, often lived in a happy balance of Eastern and Western styles. An Englishman, in his Western-style house with family portraits on the wall, dresses in Indian clothes and enjoys Indian music and dancing. c. 1800

57 An Indian nobleman enjoys the pleasure of a swing built for two in an elegant garden. Deccani painting c. 1770

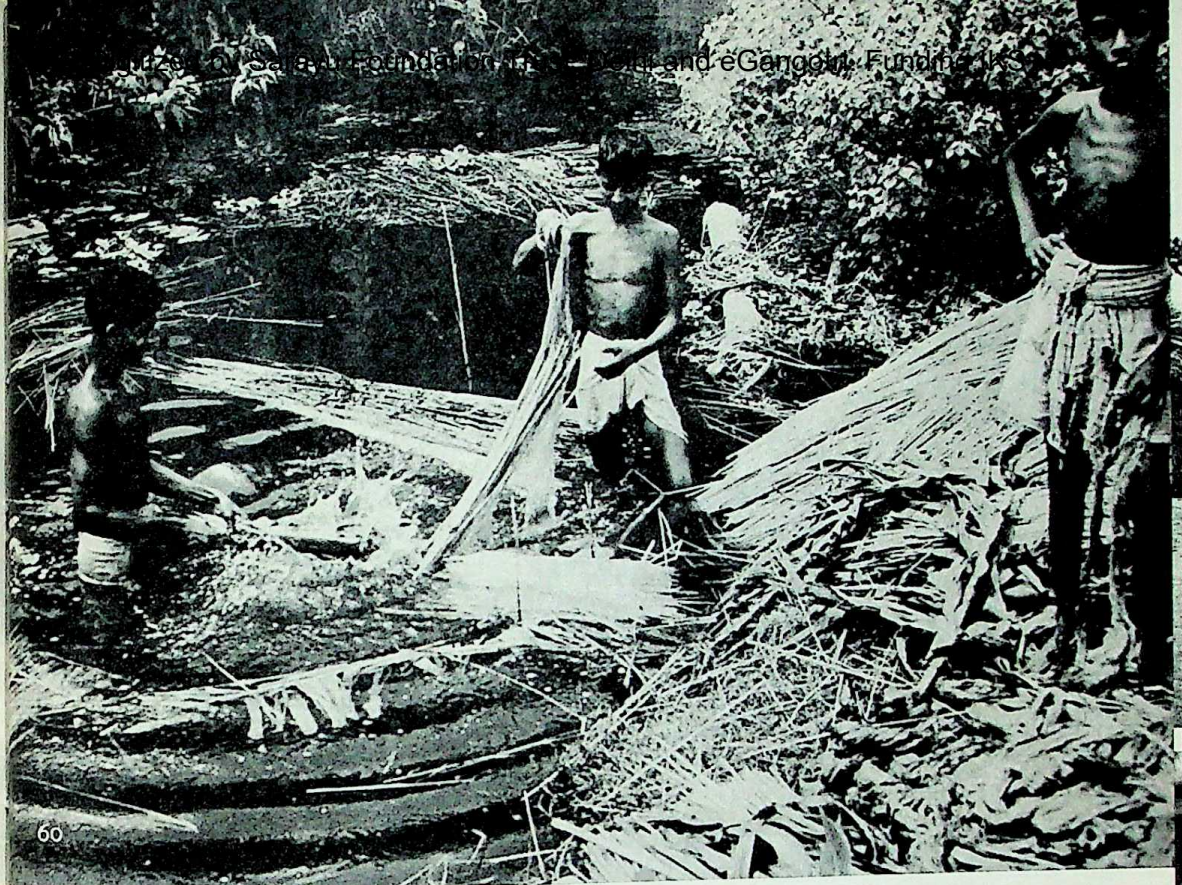




58



59



THE WORLD OF THE PEASANT

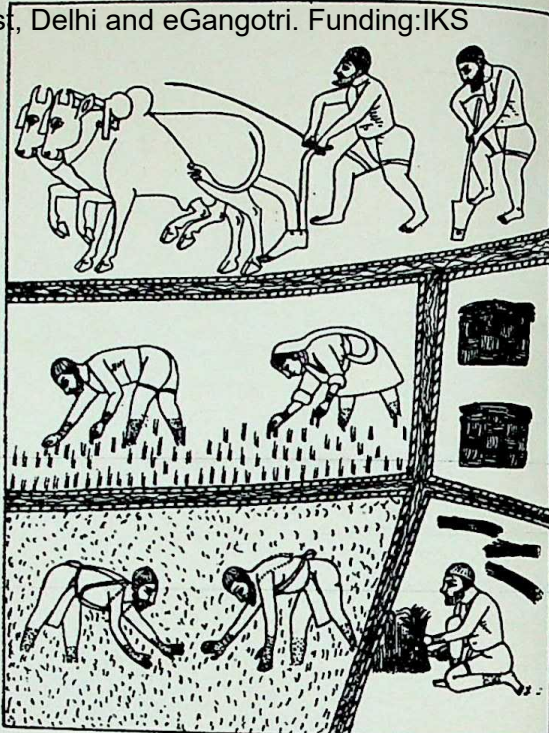
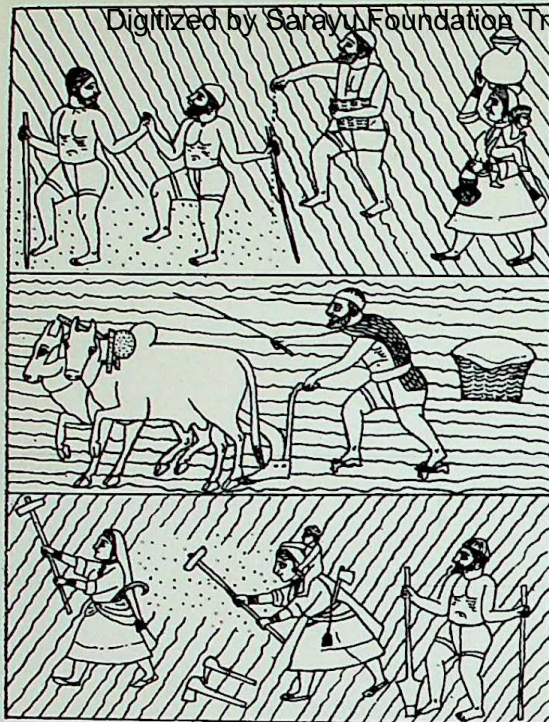
58 Irrigation c. 1830

59 Ploughing c. 1950

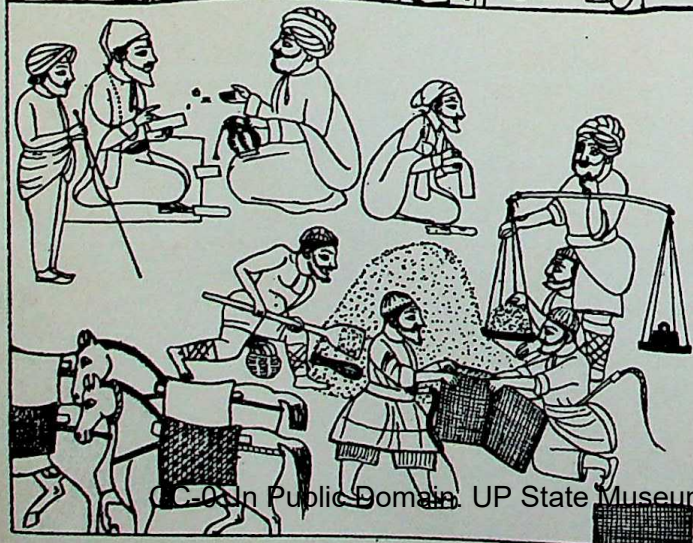
60 Extracting jute c. 1950

61 A sugar press c. 1818





62 63



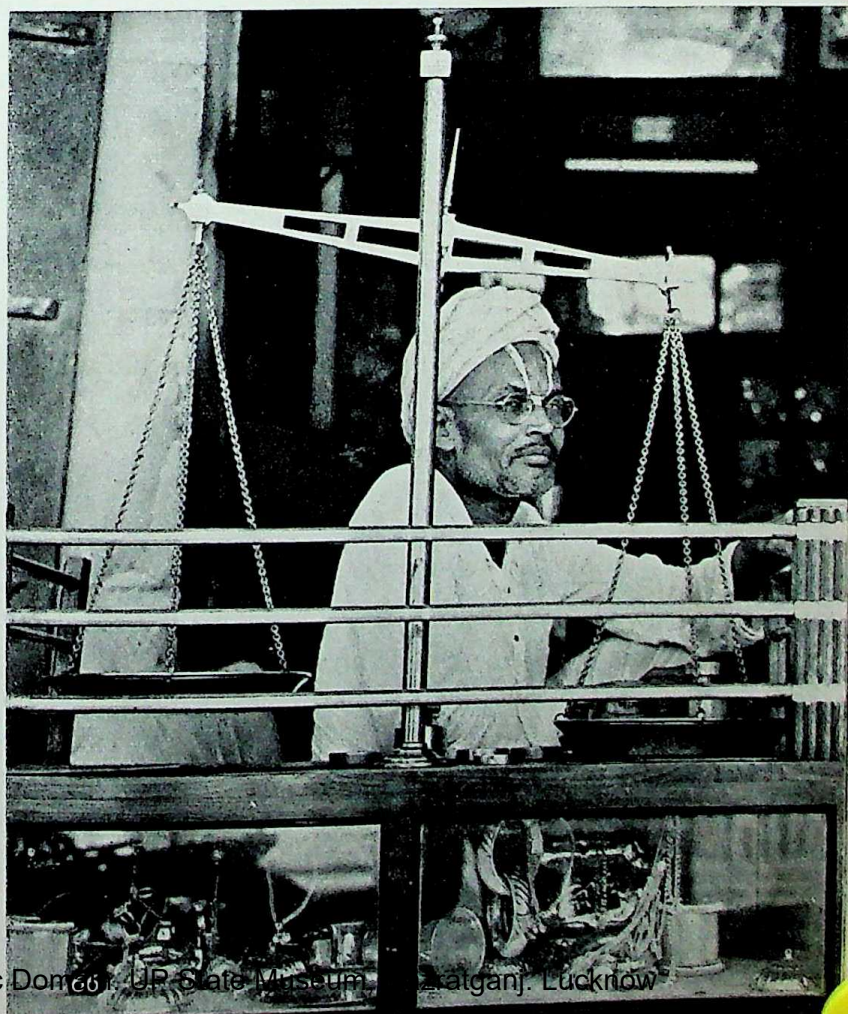
THE WORLD OF THE PEASANT

62 Dry-field cultivation c. 1820

63 Wet-field (paddy and rice) cultivation c. 1820

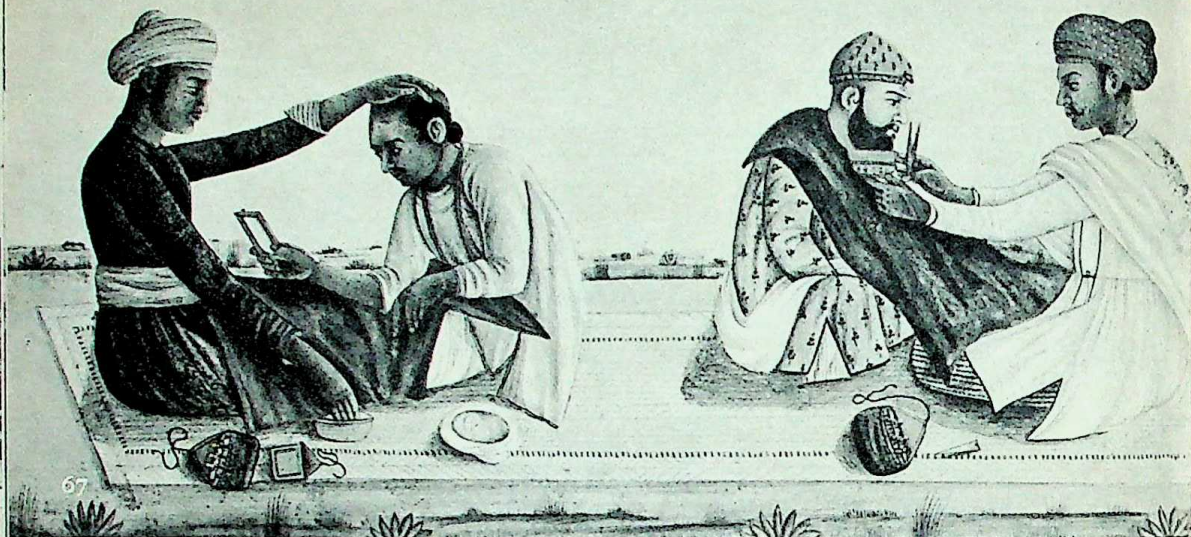
64 Threshing grain (top); land-lord selling grain to dealers (foot) c. 1820

Production methods have remained virtually unchanged until the present day



65 Winnowing wheat from chaff
1950

66 A jeweller, at Jaipur



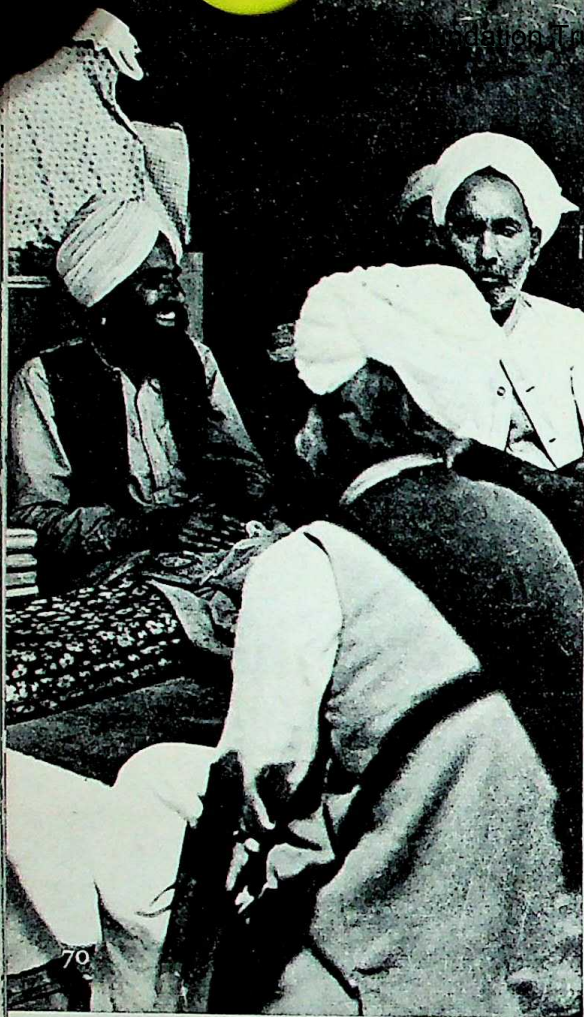


69
LIFE IN THE STREETS

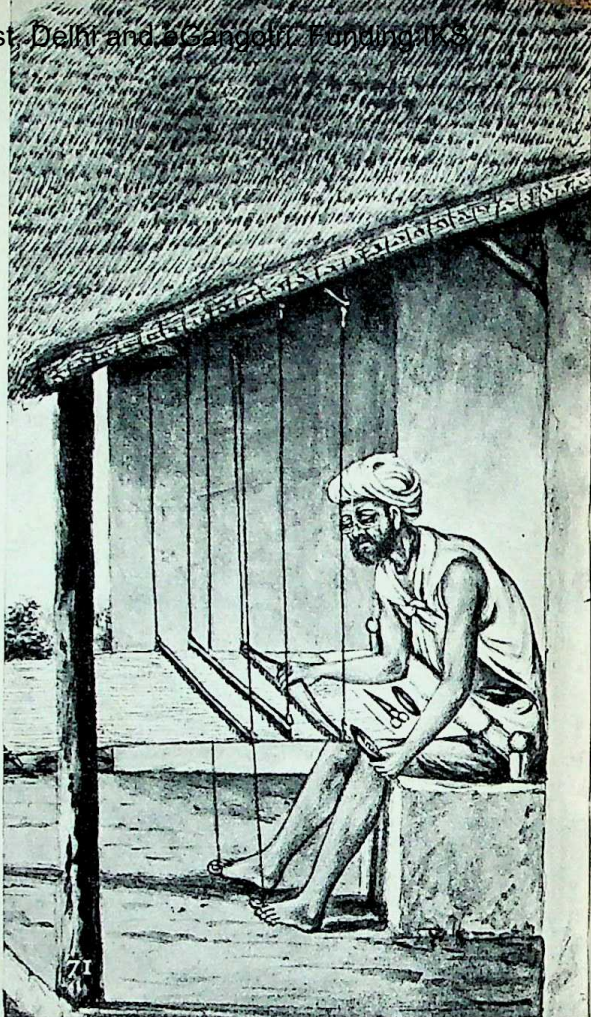
67 Two barbers at work c. 1780

68 Shaving a customer c. 1950

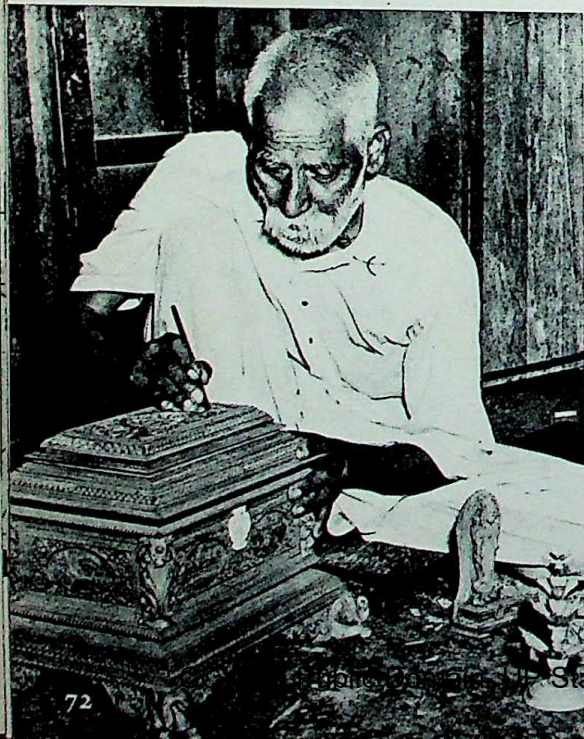
69 A market near Udaipur c. 1950. With the bright colours of fruit and spices, and the sun dappling them through the mats, the market is not only for commerce; it is the meeting-place of the village



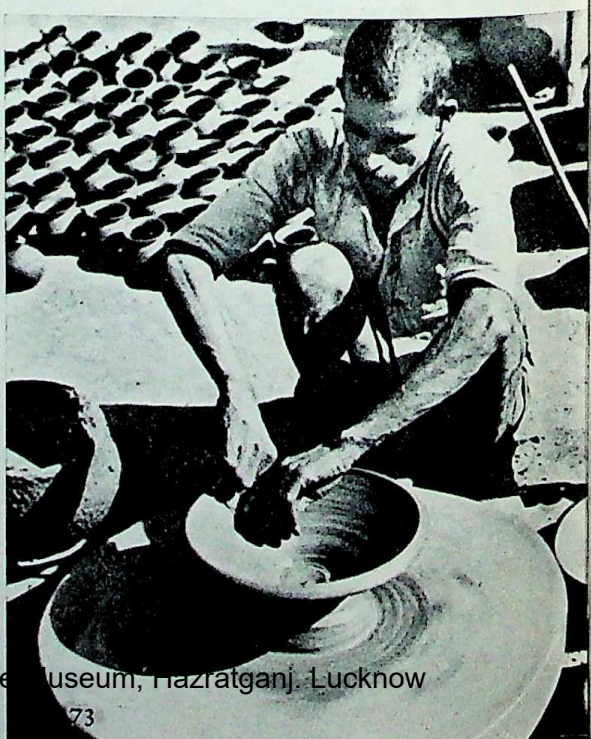
70



71



72



73



74

POINT OF SALE

70 A village cloth-shop c. 1950

MOMENT OF MANUFACTURE

71 A hand-loom weaver c. 1830

TRADITIONAL CRAFT

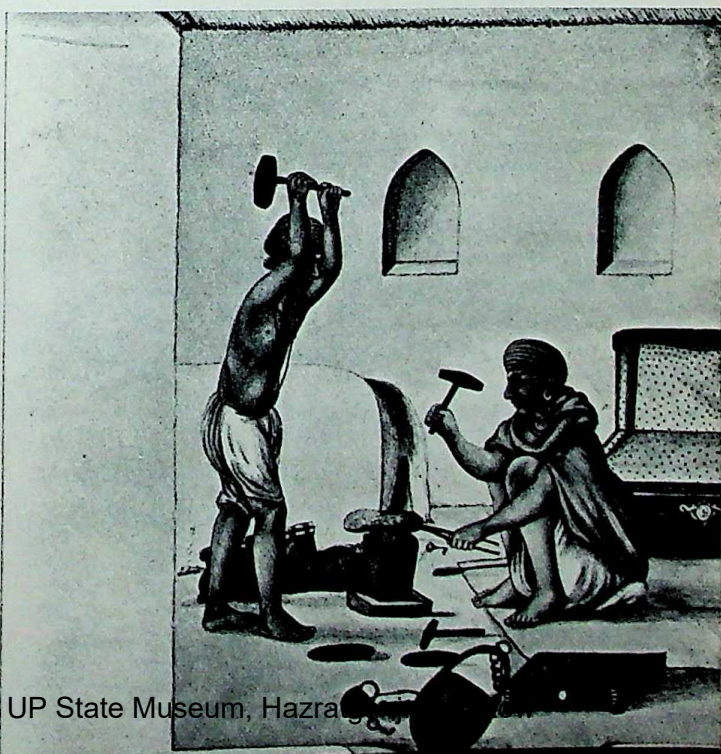
72 Carving in sandalwood c. 1950

73 The village potter c. 1950

THE WORKING OF IRON

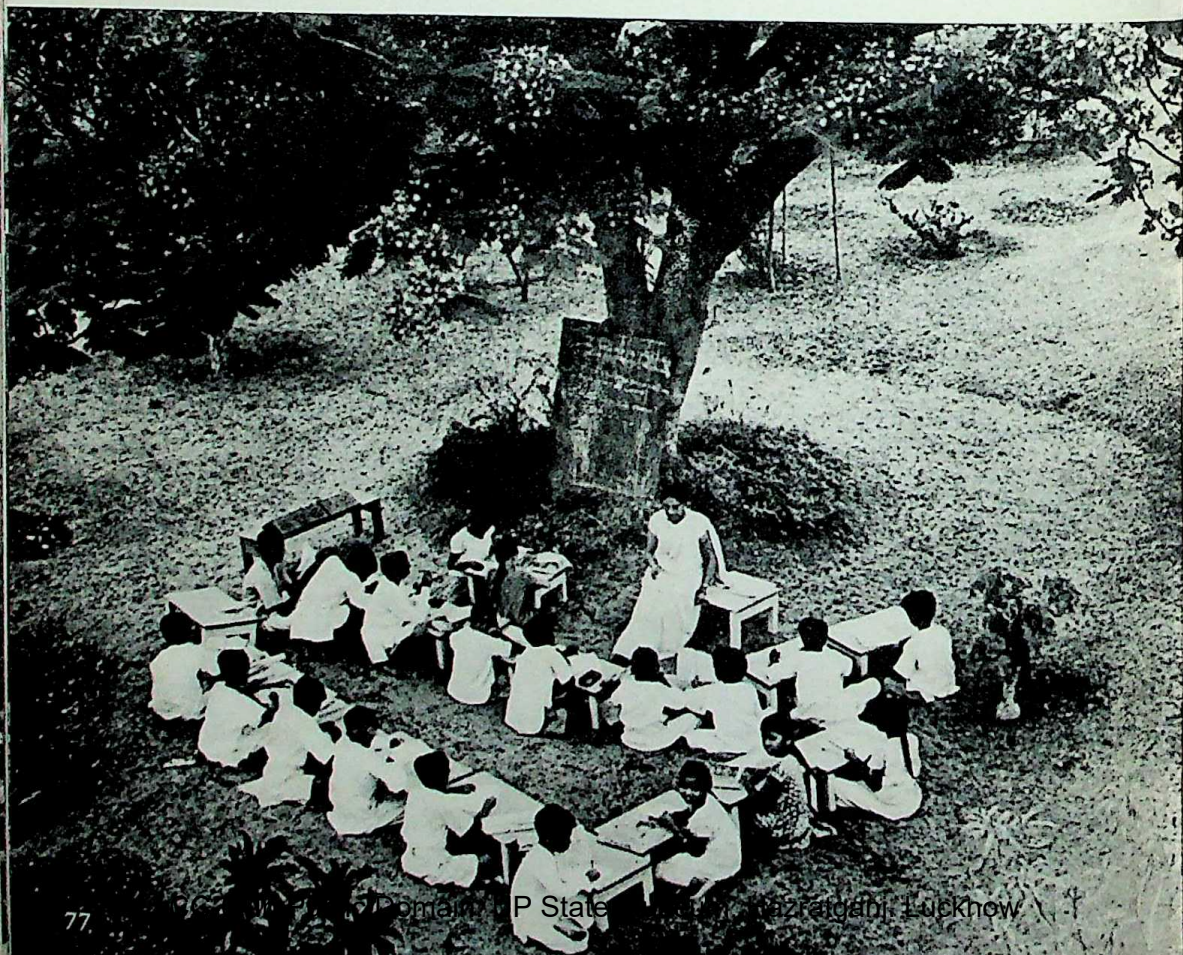
74 In an Indian railway workshop a locomotive part is made. c. 1950

75 In the village, the blacksmiths hammer a ploughshare. c. 1830

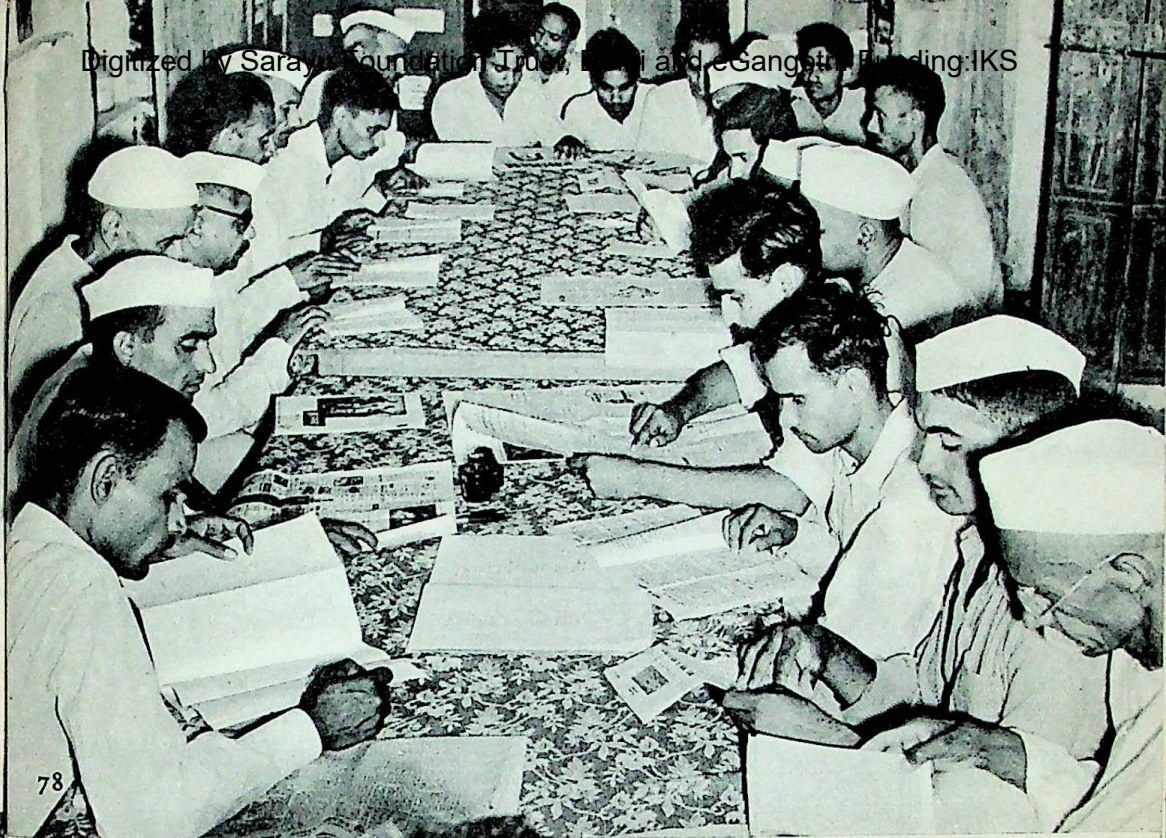




76



77



78

THE DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE

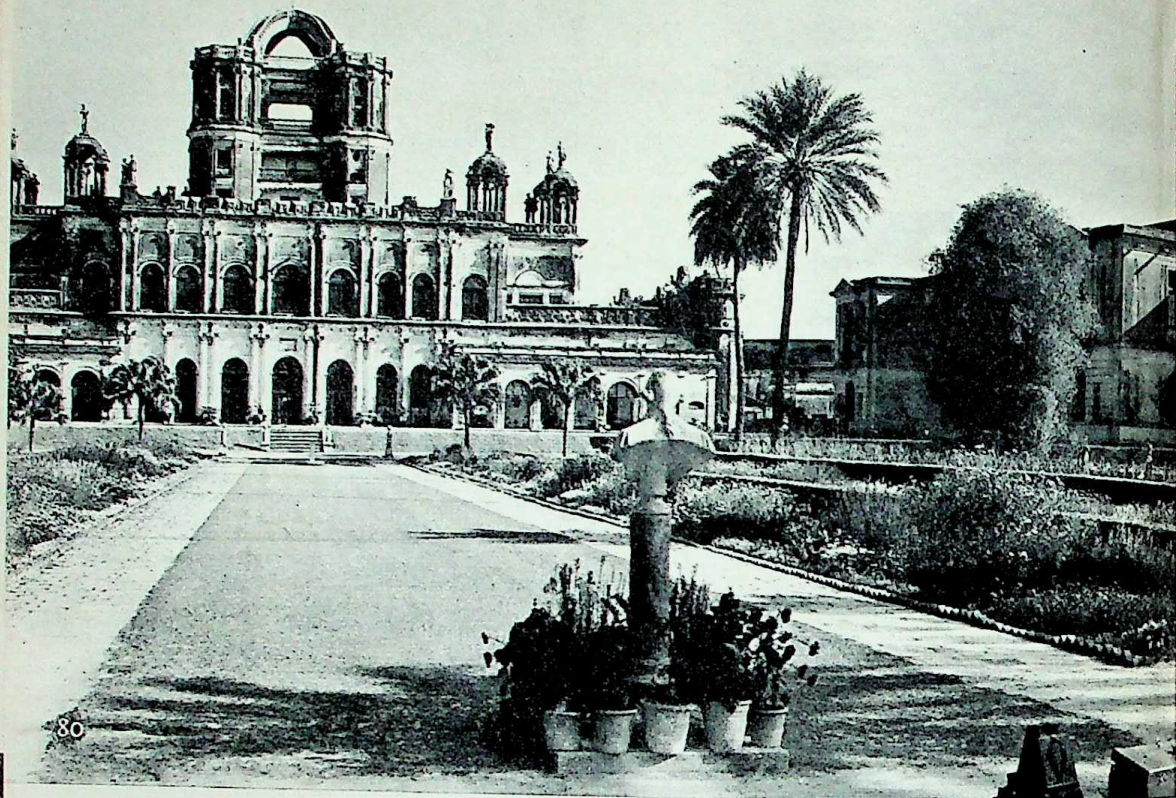
76 Rural education. *c.* 1818. A Hindu teacher with his class

77 Rural education. *c.* 1958. The ancient practice of having schools in the open air means that a school building can be a shady tree. Education in India does not wait for costly equipment

78 A village reading-room. *c.* 1958

79 An old woman learns to write. *c.* 1958

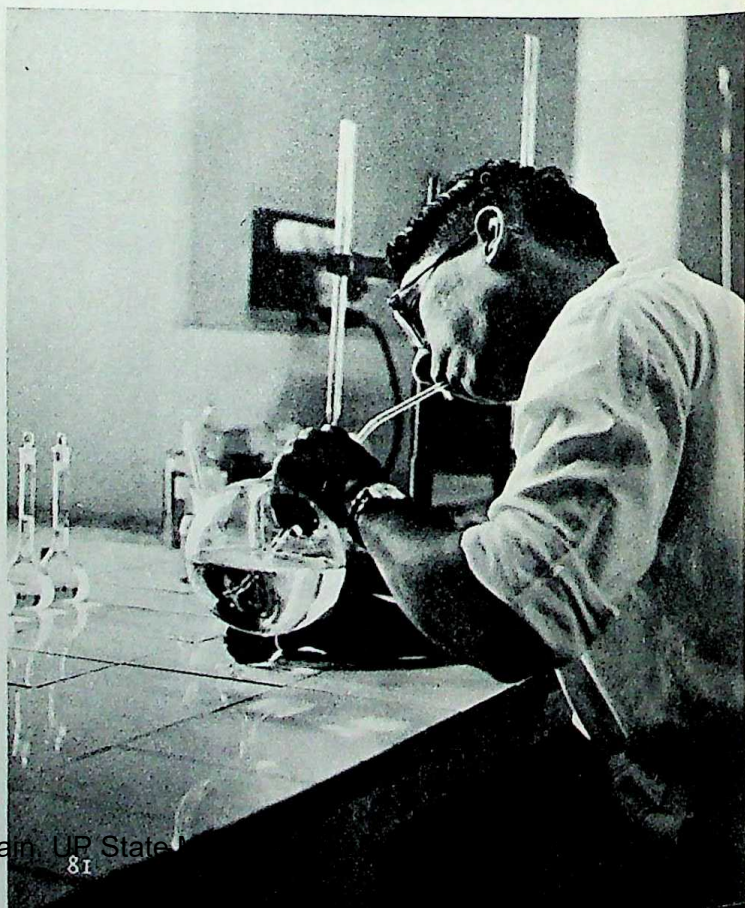




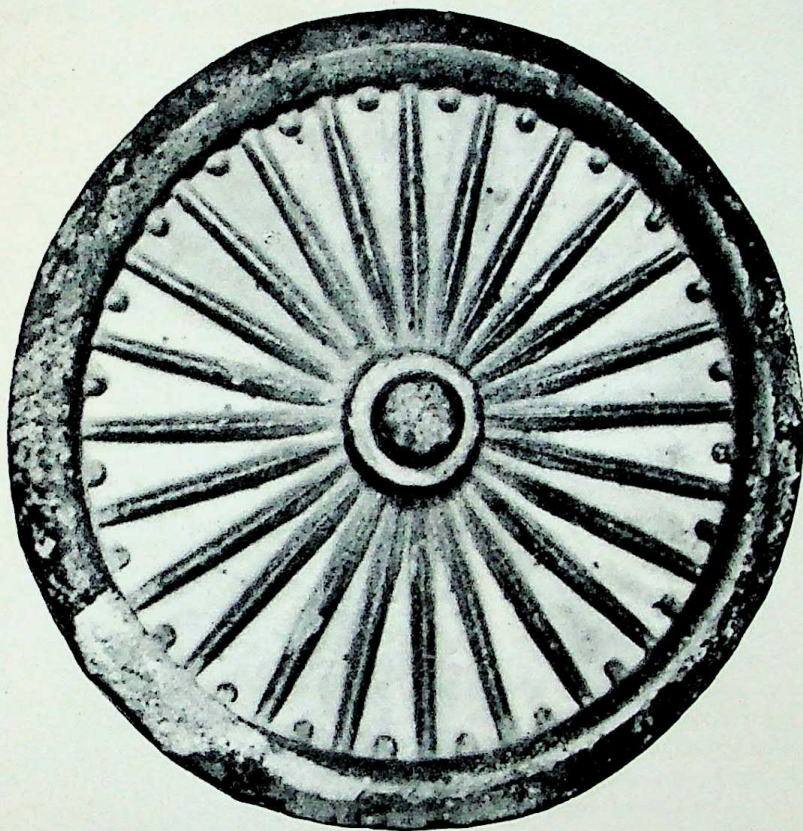
HIGHER EDUCATION

80 La Martinière College, Lucknow. The building was designed by General Martin, a French officer in the service of the Nawab of Oudh. It was left unfinished at his death in 1800. In 1840 it was opened as a school. A bust of Martin is in the foreground. Readers of Kipling's *Kim* will find La Martinière disguised as 'St Xavier's in Partibus'

81 At work in the laboratory of the Food Research Centre at Mysore. Independent India has put great emphasis upon technical and scientific education



Portraits of Power



82 THE MAURYA EMPEROR ASOKA
273-232 B.C. There is no likeness of
Asoka. The Wheel, however, is not only
a symbol of Buddhist doctrine but of the
Universe—and hence of the Universal
Emperor. Asoka thought of himself as
such, and the Wheel from the Lion
Pillar at Sarnath can be seen as a portrait
of the Emperor. The lions, and the Wheel,
are today the blazon of the government of
the Indian Republic



83

83 ALEXANDER THE GREAT 356-323 B.C. Portrait head on a gold coin of Lysimachus, King of Thrace 323-281 B.C. in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

84 EUCRATIDES, KING OF BACTRIA c. 175 B.C. From a coin in the British Museum. The helmet, without the plume, bears a striking resemblance to the characteristic headgear worn by Europeans in India in the present century, known, after the Viceroy of that name, as the Curzon topee



84



85

85 MENANDER, KING OF KABUL c. 180-160 B.C. Remembered for *The Questions of Milinda* (Menander), a famous Buddhist text; he was said to have been a Buddhist, and on his death many cities claimed the honour of building a *stupa* over his ashes

सुधासेनानन्दार्द्धविराट्पादसु

86

86 Signature of HARSHA-VARDHANA Ruler of Kanauj A.D. 606-c. 647



88



87

87 VIKRAMADITYA II Chalukya king A.D. 733-746. The head of this king, whose reign-name means 'Son of Heroism', is from a sculpture in the temple of Virupaksha (a name of Siva) at Pattadakal, built by the king. c. A.D. 740

88 KANISHKA KUSHAN c. A.D. 120-c. 162. Headless statue in yellow sandstone, now in the museum at Mathura, possibly representing Kanishka as the sun-god. The inscription reads 'devaputra', a title used by the Kushans and meaning roughly the equivalent of 'Son of Heaven'—the title of the Chinese emperors from whom it may have been copied



THE HOUSE OF TIMUR

89 TIMUR (Tamerlane) 1336-1405. Mughal miniature c. 1780

90 BABUR 1482-1530; AKBAR 1542-1605. Mughal miniature early 19th century

91 SHAH JAHAN 1592-1666. Mughal miniature c. 1770

92 JAHANGIR 1569-1627. Mughal miniature c. 1770

93 AURANGZEB 1618-1707. Mughal miniature c. 1700

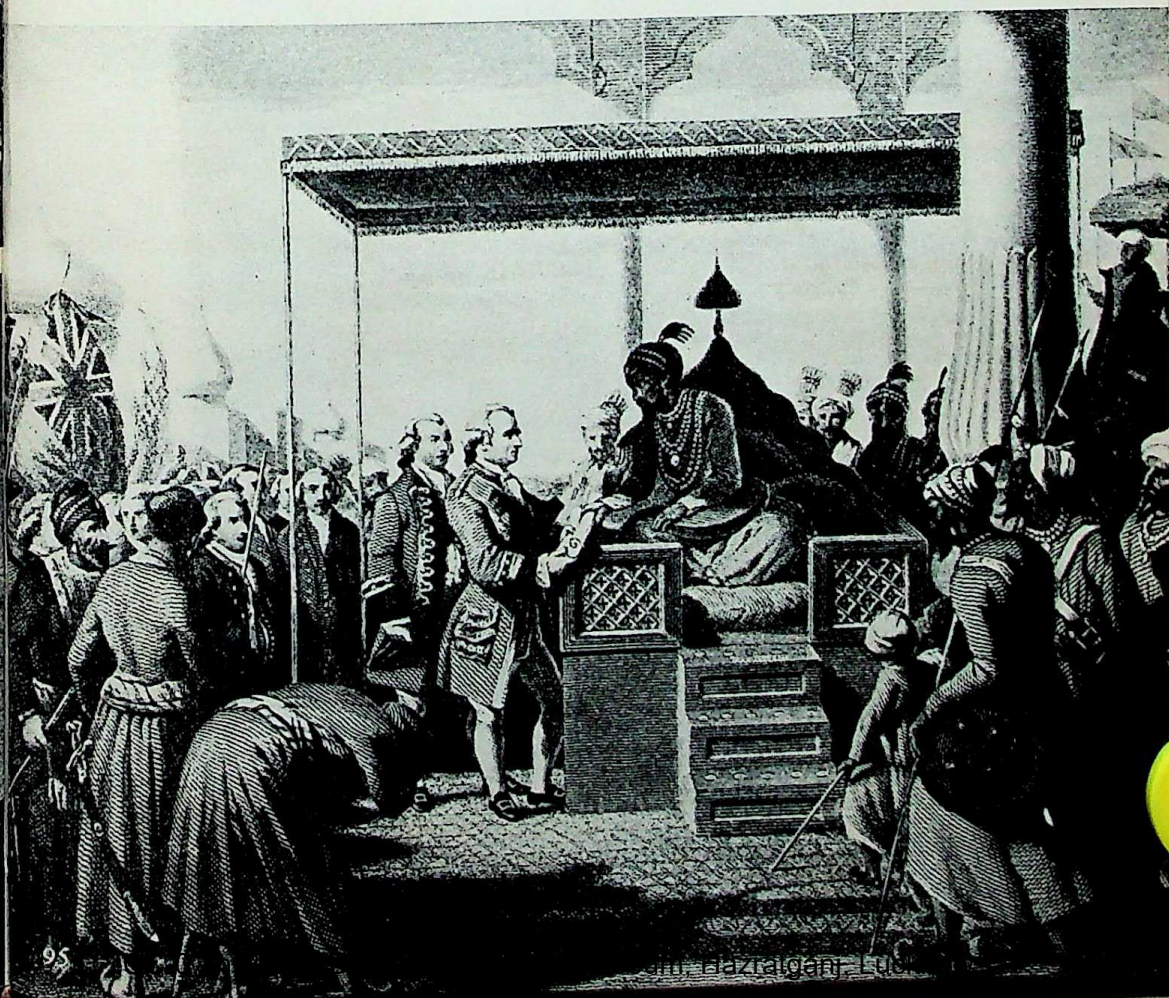


94 JOSEPH FRANÇOIS, MARQUIS DU ROY, Governor-General of the French Indies 1741-54. Duplex, though he failed to found a French empire in India, discovered the method by which the British were to consolidate theirs. By intriguing amongst the degenerate successors to the Mughal Empire, he established the principle of subsidiary alliances which Wellesley was to follow, long after, and created the basis of 'indirect rule'

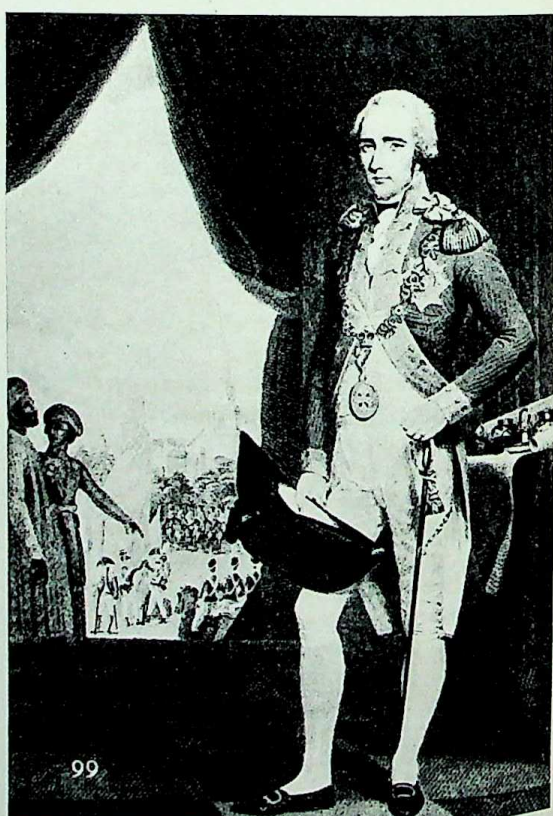
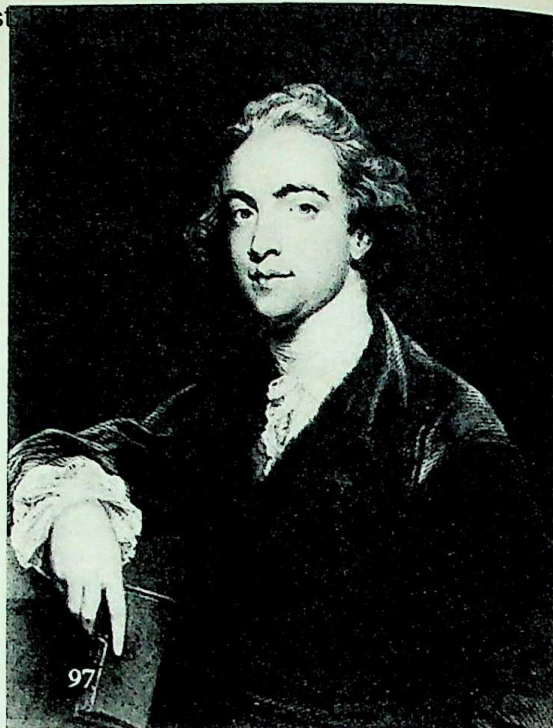


94

95 ROBERT, LORD CLIVE 1725-74. The puppet Mughal emperor, Shah Alam, handing to Clive the formal grant of sovereign rights in Bengal. The British hid their rule behind the fiction that they were tributaries of the Mughal Empire, an action founded upon Indian precedent. The Emperor was still believed, particularly by those Indian and British who were carving up his empire, to be the *legal* source of power, even if he had to be imprisoned, or bribed into delegating it



95

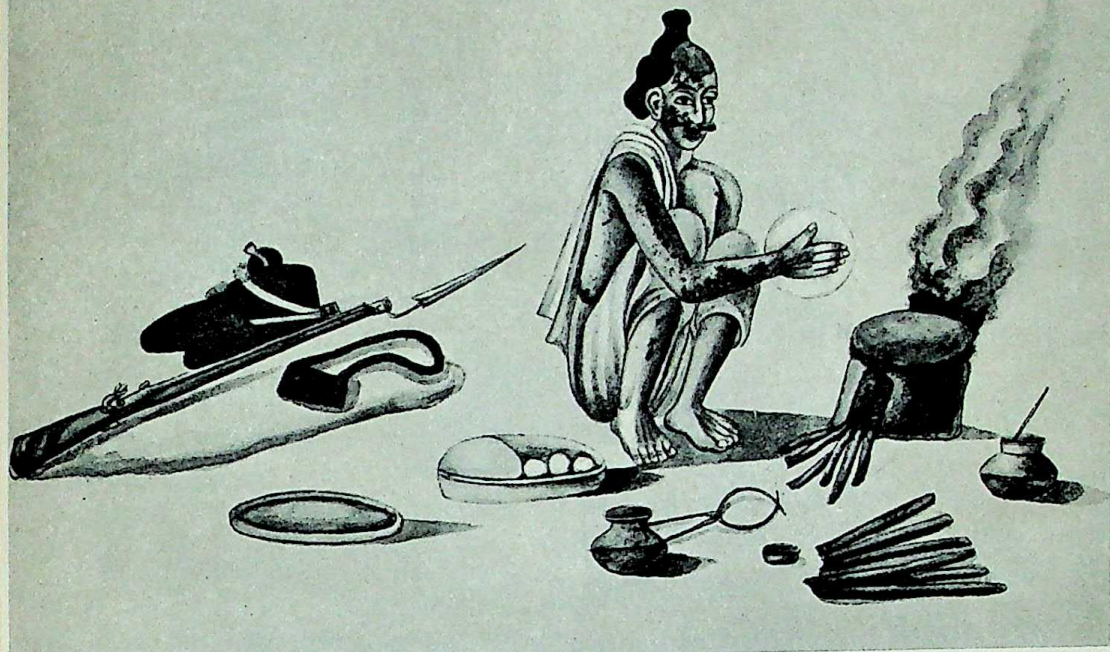


96 WARREN HASTINGS 1732-1818, by Reynolds. Governor of Bengal 1772, and Governor-General 1774-85

97 SIR WILLIAM JONES 1764-94, by Reynolds. Translator of Sanskrit literature, and founder of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1784)

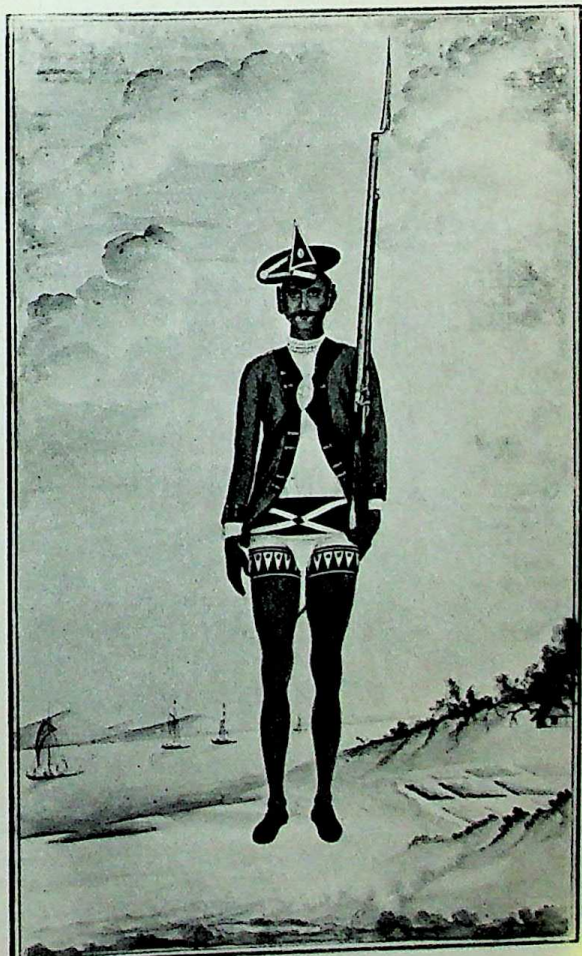
98 ARTHUR WELLESLEY later Duke of Wellington, 1769-1852. By Robert Home

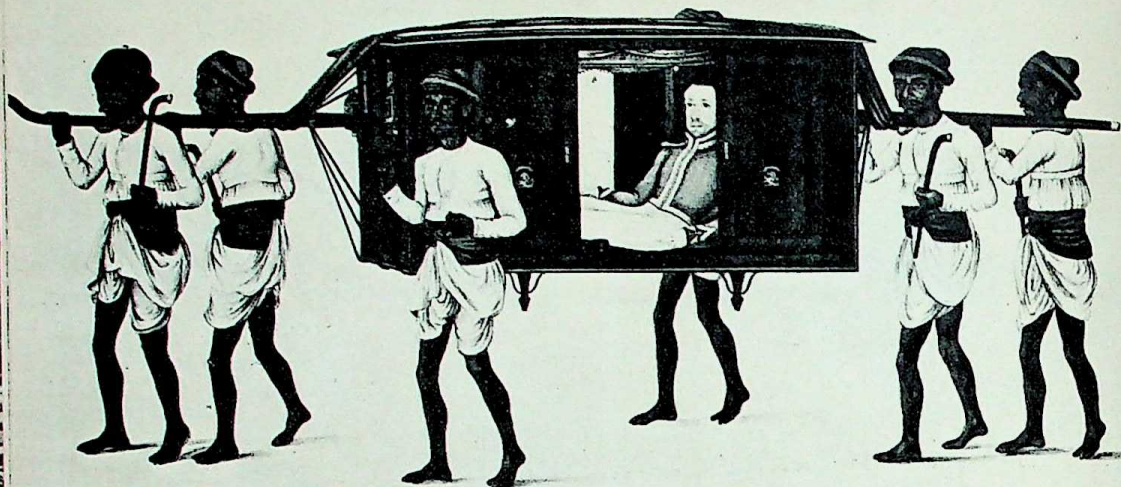
99 RICHARD COLLEY, MARQUESS WELLESLEY 1760-1842. By Robert Home. Governor-General 1798-1805



100

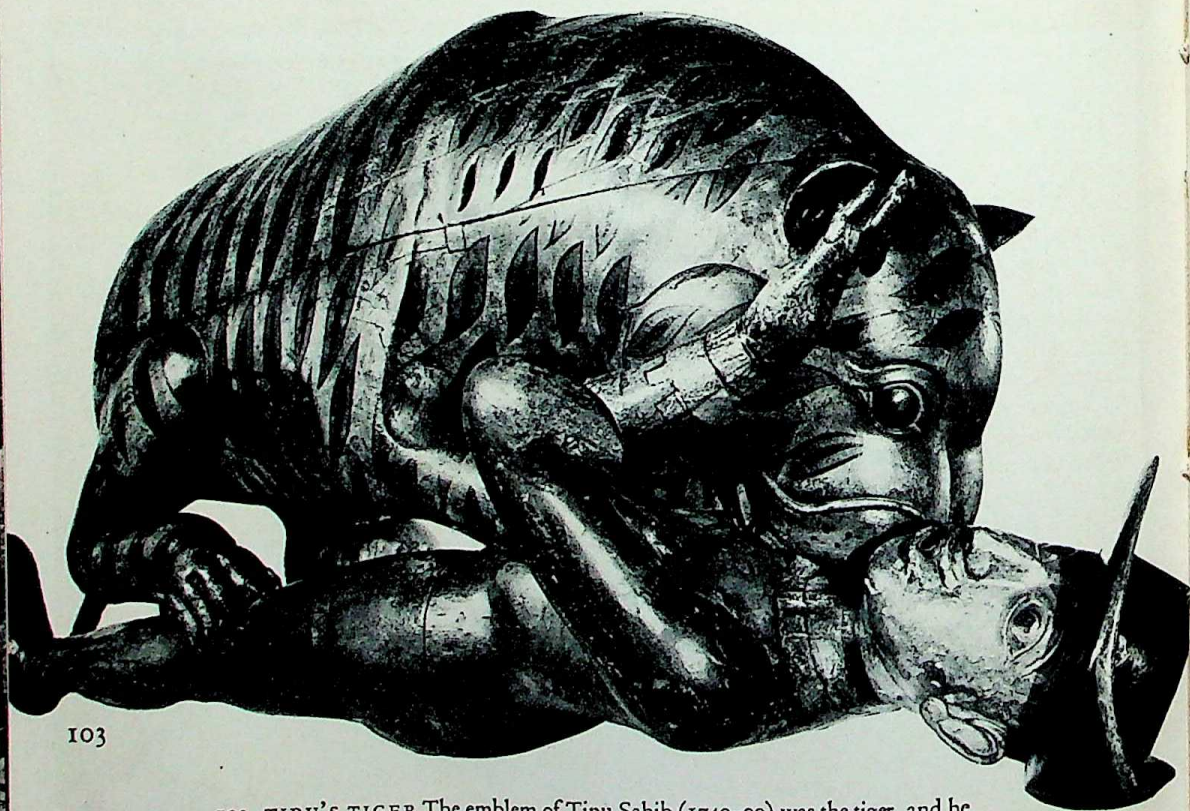
100, 101 THE SEPOY The name comes from the Persian *sipahi*, from *sipah*, an army. The Frenchman, Dupleix, first established the fact that native troops trained in European methods, armed with European weapons, and led by Europeans, could in only small numbers defeat the irregular cavalry of Indian rulers. Stringer Lawrence, sometimes called the Father of the Indian Army, first organized and disciplined sepoys for the Company's army. The expansion of British dominion was achieved by predominantly native armies. On the eve of the Mutiny of 1857, there were 277,746 sepoys and 45,522 British officers and men in India. The sepoy took into the army with him all his caste prejudices, which at the beginning were rigidly protected. But later attempts to impose new types of dress, etc., caused great fear amongst the sepoys and resulted in a number of mutinies culminating in that of 1857. These two pictures show (below) a sepoy in the Bengal Army c. 1806, and (above) a sepoy baking his own bread (*chapattis*)





102

102 THE BURDEN OF EMPIRE A British officer being carried in a palanquin c. 1828



103

103 TIPU'S TIGER The emblem of Tipu Sahib (1749-99) was the tiger, and he himself was known as the Tiger of Mysore. This life-size model, said to have been made by French craftsmen, was a representation of himself attacking the English, and is, therefore, an allegorical portrait. The tiger contains a musical-box mechanism. When wound, the head moves up and down and the tiger roars



FOUR REFORMERS

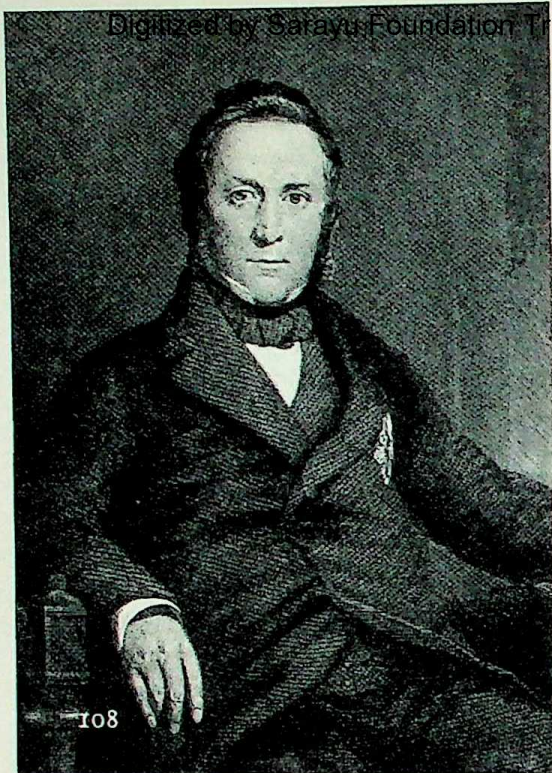
104 LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK 1774-1839. Governor-General 1828-35

106 RAM MOHUN ROY 1772-1833. Founder of the Brahmo Samaj 1828

105 LORD MACAULAY 1800-59. Law Member of the Indian Supreme Council 1834-8

107 SIR WILLIAM SLEEMAN 1788-1856. Suppressor of Thuggee

CC-0. In Public Domain. UP State Museum, Hazratganj. Lucknow



108

108 LORD DALHOUSIE 1812-60. Governor-General 1848-56



109

109 SIR HENRY LAWRENCE 1806-57. First British Resident in the Punjab, and founder of the 'Punjab System'. Miniature by Ghulam Khan 1852



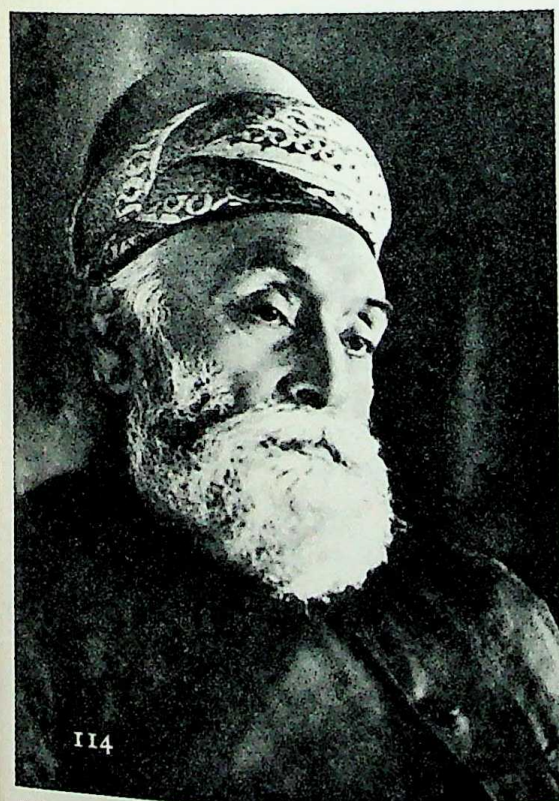
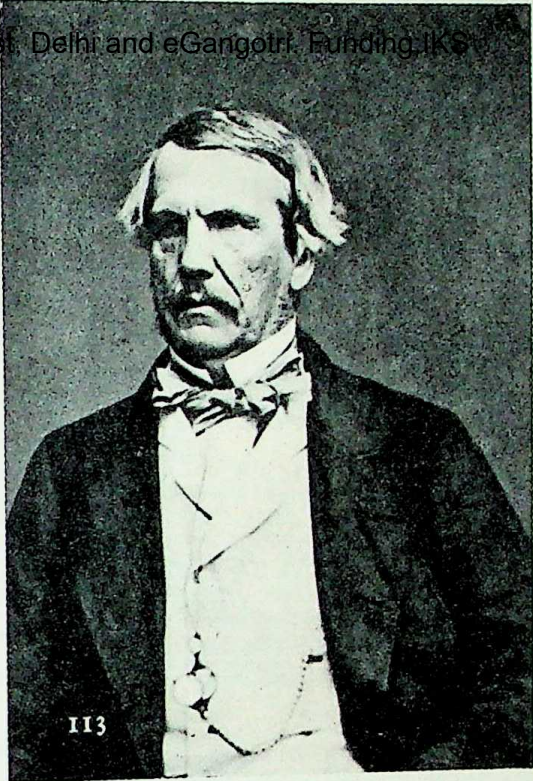
110

110 RANJIT SINGH 1780-1839. Ruler of the Punjab. From an album of paintings c. 1840



III

III SIKH RULERS AND MINISTERS, AND THE AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN Dost Muhammad, Amir of Afghanistan, is in the centre of the bottom row. Coloured woodcuts made in the Punjab c. 1840

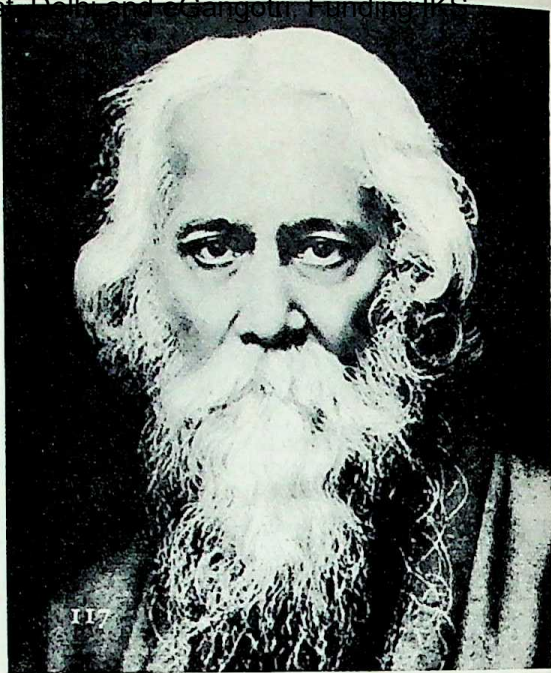
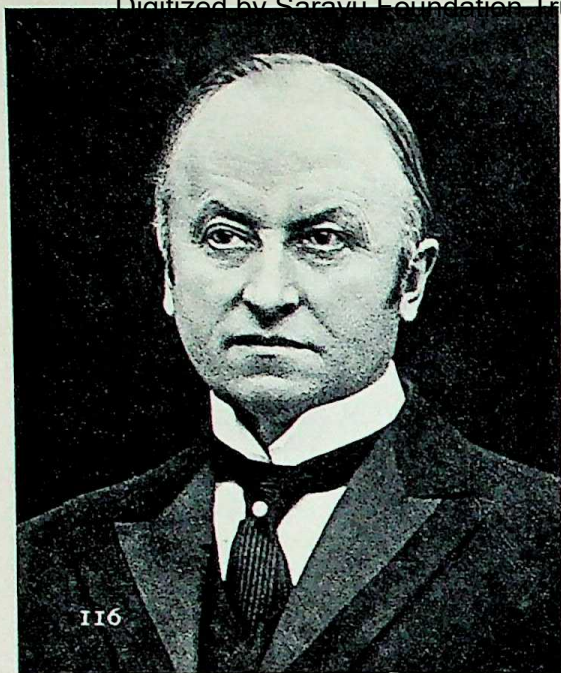


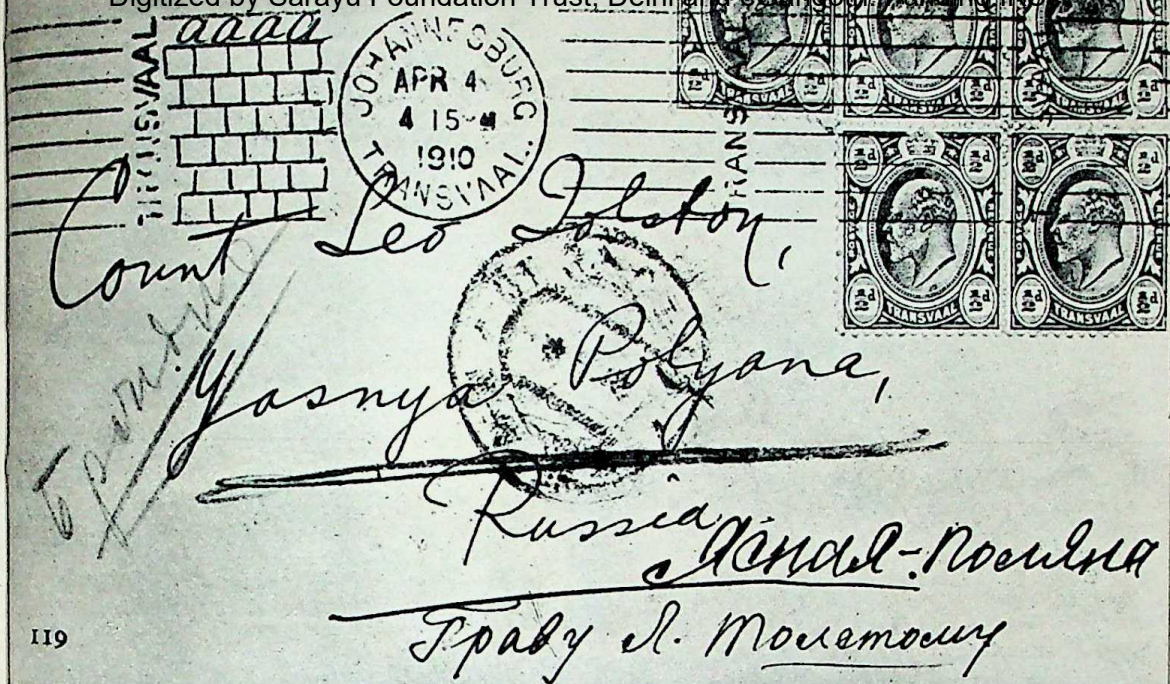
II2 LORD CANNING 1812-62. Governor-General 1856-8. First Viceroy, 1858-62

II4 JAMSETJI TATA 1839-1904. Founder of the Indian iron and steel industry

II3 LORD LAWRENCE 1811-79. The first, and last, Indian Civil Servant to be appointed Viceroy, 1864-9. Brother of Henry Lawrence

II5 LORD RIPON 1827-1909, Viceroy 1880-4





119

116 LORD CURZON 1859-1925, Viceroy 1899-1905

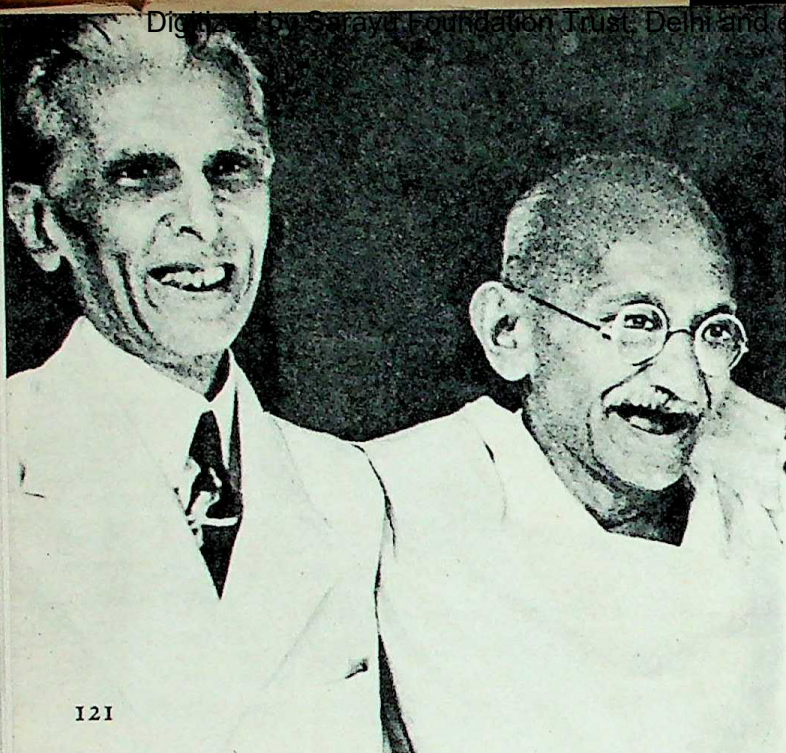
117 RABINDRANATH TAGORE 1861-1941. Poet, author, educational reformer and nationalist. Nobel prize-winner 1913

118 LORD IRWIN (later Earl of Halifax) 1881-1959, Viceroy 1926-31. With the British Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin, and the Archbishop of Canterbury at Victoria Station, London, on his departure for India

119 MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI 1869-1948. Called 'Mahatma' ('Great Soul'), Gandhi was a combination of revolutionary and conservative. His ideas were formed from the teachings of Ruskin and Tolstoy (above is the cover of a letter written by Gandhi in South Africa), the Sermon on the Mount, and the *Bhagavad Gita*

120 THE CRIPPS MISSION, 1942. Mahatma Gandhi and Sir Stafford Cripps in Delhi



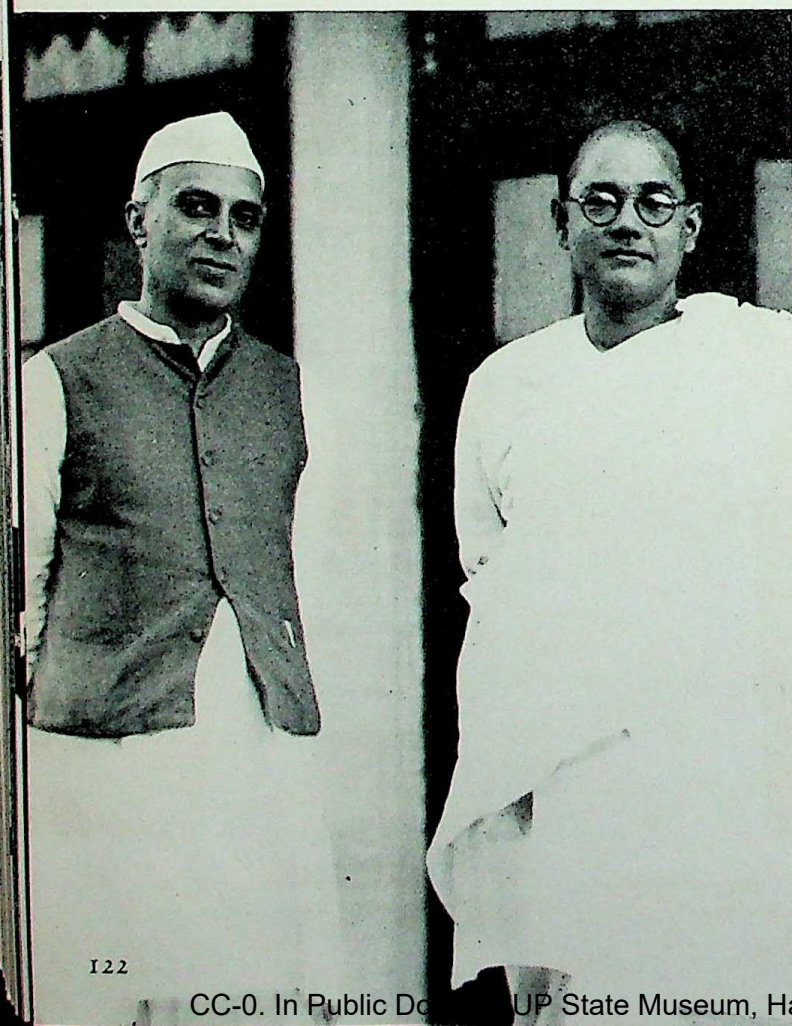


121

121 M. A. JINNAH 1876-1948. The Muslim leader popularly known as 'Quaid-i-Azam' ('Mighty Ruler'). President of the Muslim League from 1916. First Governor-General of Pakistan 1947. He is seen here with Mahatma Gandhi in 1944, when an unsuccessful attempt was made to reconcile the League's desire for Partition with the Congress' belief in a federal India

122 THE TWO FACES OF INDIAN NATIONALISM Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and Subhas Chandra Bose 1897-1945. Bose formed the Provisional Government of Free India with Japanese support in Singapore in 1943

123 AT THE END OF EMPIRE Mahatma Gandhi leans on the shoulder of Lady Mountbatten, wife of the last Viceroy



122



123

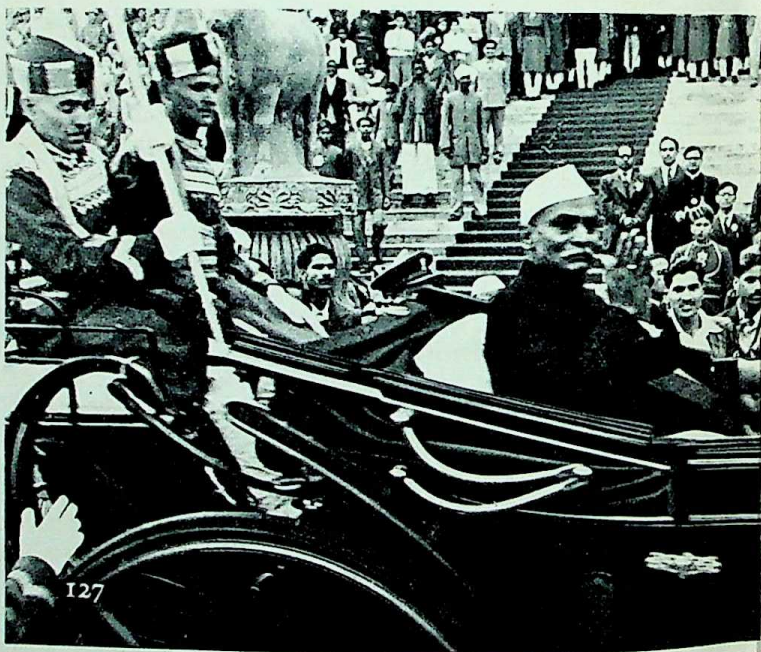


I24

I24 PANDIT NEHRU Prime Minister of independent India, arriving at the first meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in London in September 1948



125

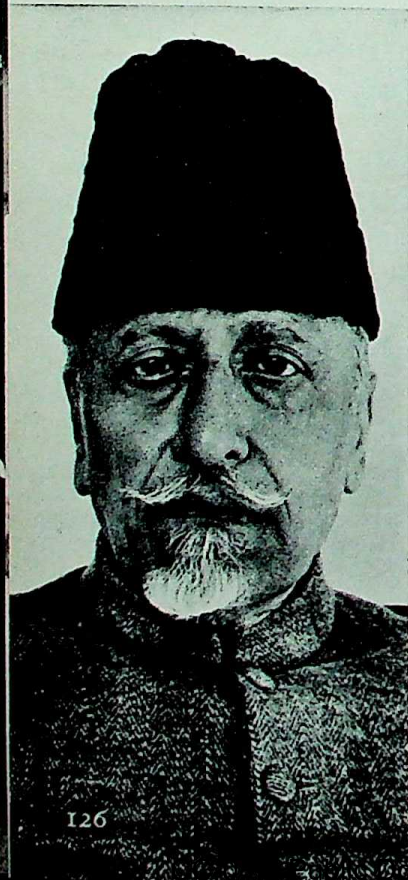


127

125 MASTER TARA SINGH Leader of the six million Sikhs in the Indian Punjab, who has continued his agitation for a new State in the Punjab after Independence

126 MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD 1889-1958. A distinguished Muslim scholar who was Indian Education Minister 1947-58

127 DR RAJENDRA PRASAD leaving on a State drive after his inauguration as first President of the Republic of India, 1950



126

INDEX

Figures in italics refer to illustrations

- ABBAS, Shah of Persia, 201
 Abdul Hamid, 170
 Abdur Rahman, 304, 335
 Abdur Razzak, 119, 122-4, 140
 Albiruni, 102
 Abul Fazl, 153, 154, 158, 190
 Act for the better government of India, 1858, 249, 299, 305, 335
Acts of Thomas, 64
 Adam, John, 238
 Adham Khan, 152
Adi Granth, 191, 50
 Adil Khan (Adil Shah), 119, 144
 Afghan War I, 240, 244, 245, 295, 299, 300; II, 304, 335; III, 314, 336
 Afghanistan, 101, 173, 176, 182, 212, 237, 240, 242, 244, 299, 300, 301-4, 314, 327
 Afghans of Bengal, 133
 Africa, East, 189, 224
 Africa, South, 326, 336
 Afzul Khan, 301
 Agastya, 20
 Agni, 28, 4
 Agra, 126, 132, 133, 134, 138, 152, 154, 163, 164, 166, 167, 169, 170, 174, 176, 187, 200, 201, 202, 251, 264, 295, 34, 36
 Agricultural scenes, 58-65
 Ahmad, Sir Syed, 323, 334
 Ahmad Shah, of Gujarat, 125
 Ahmad Shah Abdali, 229
 Ahmad Shah Bahmani, 116
 Ahmadabad, 125, 217, 277, 327
 Ahmadnagar, 118, 119, 152, 153, 166, 169, 174, 177, 200, 201
 Ahmed Khan, 244
 Aihole, statues from temples at, 2, 11, 12, 13
 Ajanta, 81, 25
 Ajatasatru, 42, 98
 Ajmir, 102, 104, 152, 173
 Akbar, Emperor, 125, 134, 135, 152-62, 163, 169, 171, 172, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 200, 226, 90
 Akbar, Prince, 173-4, 202
 Ala-ud-din, 107-8, 110-11, 139
 Ala-ud-din Bahmani, 115, 140
 Albuquerque, Alfonso de, 144, 145, 200
 Alexander, King of Macedon, 37-40, 57, 98, 83
 Alexander IV (Borgia), Pope, 143
 Alexandria, Egypt, 45
 Aligarh, 250, 323, 335
 Alivardi Khan, 207
 Allahabad (Prayag), 20, 85, 89, 215, 250, 251, 271
 All-India Khaddar Association, 317
 All-Party Conference, 328
 Amanullah, 314
 Amaravati, 68
 Ambala, 250
 Amber, 200
 Amboyna, 196
 Amherst, Lady, 267
 Amherst, Lord, 238, 239
 Amir Khusru, 128
 Amritsar, 326, 336
 Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, etc., 308, 335
 Andhras, 62, 63, 64, 68, 69, 89, 90, 92
 Anson, General, 250
 Antioch, 45
 Arabs, 95, 98, 116, 144, 145
 Arakan, 239, 283, 294
 Aras, battle of, 217
 Arcot, 182, 206, 229
 Arikamedu, 70
 Arjun, Guru, 191, 200
 Armagaon, 196
 Armenians, 224
 Arrah, 251, 252
 Arya Samaj, 319-20, 335
 Aryavarta, 20, 37
 Asaf Jah, 206, 229
 Asaf Khan, 168-9
 Asaf-ud-daula, mosque of tomb of, 40
 Asiatic Society of Bengal, 229

- Asoka, 45-8, 50, 53, 62, 63, 69, 74, 89,
98; pillar of, 82
Assam, 74, 85, 173, 251, 283, 330
Asvagosha, 66
Asvins, the, 28
Atharva-Veda, 24
Attlee, Clement, 330
Auckland, Lord, 240, 244, 245, 295
Aungier, Gerald, 197
Aurangzeb, 169, 172-7, 186, 189, 191-4,
198, 201, 202, 93; mosque of, 38
Aurangabad, 250
Ava, 239, 305
Avanti, 32
Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam, 126
Azes I, 64
- BABUR, 126, 131-3, 135, 140, 169, 189,
190, 226, 90
Bactria, 63, 64, 66
Badakshan, 169
Badami, 90, 21, 24, 32
Badaun, 108
Bagh, 81
Baghat, 289
Baghdad, Caliphate of, 95
Bahadur Shah (formerly Prince Muazzam),
181, 202
Bahadur Shah II, King of Delhi, 247,
290
Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, 145, 200
Bahlul Lodi, 126, 140
Bahmani Dynasty, 115-16, 117
Bahram, 139
Bairam Khan, 152, 154, 155
Baird, General, 234
Bajaur, 131
Baji Rao I, Peshwa, 202
Baji Rao II, Peshwa, 234, 236, 238, 247,
290, 294
Balban, 107, 139
Balfour, Lady Betty, 311
Balkh, 133, 143, 169, 240, 241
Baluchistan, 95, 153, 200, 330
Baluchs, 300
Bana, 77
Bantam, 195
Barani, 107
Bareilly, 250, 252
Barhut, 62, 67
Barlow, Sir George, 237
Barnard, General, 251
Barrackpore, 239, 247, 250, 281, 294
Barwell, Richard, 216
Bassein, 217, 236; treaty of, 294
Batavia, 208
Beas, river, 19, 38
Becher, Richard, 212
Beck, Mr, 323
Benares (Banaras, Kasi), 20, 51, 104, 129,
139, 222, 250, 264, 270, 276, 38, 49;
painting from, 61, 75, 101
Bengal, 19, 20, 74, 76, 94, 104, 107, 111,
113, 125, 130, 133, 134, 140, 145, 152-3,
166, 169, 182, 189, 196, 198, 200, 201,
207, 209, 210, 213, 214, 216, 220, 221,
222, 224, 225, 229, 237, 239, 248, 250,
251, 272, 275, 276, 278, 279, 281,
283, 284, 309, 325, 330, 331, 332,
335, 336
Bengal Land Act, 276
Bentham, Jeremy, 286, 306
Bentinck, Lord William, 239, 255, 280,
294, 104
Bepin Chandra Pal, 325
Berar, 90, 152, 153
Berhampore, 250, 251
Bernier, François, 188
Berwa, battle of the, 252
Bhagavad Gita, 31, 190, 266, 294
Bharatpur, 239, 294
Bhartihari, *Sringara Sataka*, 81
Bhatinda, 101, 139
Bhubaneswar, temple at, 3, 30
Biana, 135, 138
Bidar, 116, 119, 140, 152
Bihar, 42, 62, 74, 83, 104, 126, 133, 139,
152, 182, 210, 222, 229, 251, 252, 253,
275, 276, 283
Bijapur, 90, 118, 119, 144, 153, 169, 173,
177, 201, 202, 39
Bimbisara, 32, 42, 98
Bindusara, 45
Bithur, 238
Bokhara, 240, 241, 244
Bolan pass, 19, 64

- Bombay, 62, 92, 179, 197, 198, 201, 202, 214, 216, 217, 237, 250, 251, 257, 278, 295, 319, 321, 326
 Bombay Presidency, 238, 251, 278, 279, 283, 294
 Bombay-Burmah Trading Corporation, 305
 Bose, Subhas Chandra, 329, 330, 122
 Bourbon, island of, 237
 Bourdonnais, La, 205
 Bradlaugh, Charles, 322
 Brahma, 31, 80, 86
 Brahmagupta, 84
 Brahmaputra, river, 20, 74, 153
 Brahmo Samaj, 266, 294, 319
 Brihadratha, 62
 Brydon, Dr, 245
 Buddha, Gautama, 32, 33, 34, 36, 53, 67, 68, 81, 86, 87, 88, 95, 98, 19, 20
 Buddhism, Mahayana and Hinayana, 66-7, 85
 Bundelkhand, 104, 237
 Burhanpur, 134
 Burial, a Muslim, 47
 Burke, Edmund, 218
 Burma, 47, 159, 239, 268, 305
 Burmese War I, 239, 267, 294; II, 246-7, 268, 295, 305; III, 305, 335
 Burnes, Alexander, 244-5, 304
 Burton, Major, 251
 Bushire, 242
 Buxar, battle of, 209, 229
- CALCUTTA, 169, 198, 202, 207, 208, 211, 217, 237, 257, 264, 266, 271, 276, 279, 281, 282, 294, 295, 321, 323, 331, 41
 Calcutta bazaar school, a painting of the, 17
 Calicut, 143, 146-51, 200
 Cambay, gulf of, 145
 Campbell, Sir Colin, 251, 252
 Canning, Lord, 247, 248, 260, 271, 295, 112
 Capper, John, 222
 Carnac, Colonel, 217
 Carnatic, 182, 218, 220, 221, 234, 294
 Cavagnari, Louis, 304
- Cawnpore (Kanpur), 248, 250, 251, 252, 271, 290
 Ceylon, 47, 71, 93, 94, 115, 196
 Chaitanya, 130
 Chalukyas, 90, 92, 93, 94, 104, 105
 Chambal, river, 19
 Chamber of Princes, 340
 Chamberlain, Neville, 303
 Chanda Sahib, 206
 Chandels, 104
 Chandernagore, 199, 207
 Chandragupta I, 74, 98
 Chandragupta II, 64, 75, 77, 81, 90, 98
 Chandragupta Maurya, 39, 42-3, 45, 46, 54, 69, 98
 Charles I, 196
 Charles II, 197
 Charnock, Job, 198
 Charsada, figurine from, 1
 Charter Act, 1793, 280; 1813, 278, 280, 294; 1833, 294, 321
 Chauhans, 102
 Chelmsford, Lord, 336
 Chenab, river, 19
Chhandogya Upanishad, 32-3
 Child, Sir Josiah, 197, 198
 Chilianwala, battle of, 246
 China, 66, 71, 72, 76, 85, 93, 94, 196, 224, 278, 345
 Chingis Khan, 106, 107, 130, 139
 Chinhat, battle of, 250
 Chinsura, 201
 Chitor, 134, 135
 Chittagong, 173, 202
 Cholas, 63, 93, 94, 104-5, 116
 Clive, Lord, 206, 207-8, 210-11, 221, 224, 229, 281, 95
 Cochin, 144
 Coimbatore, gap of, 20
 Colbert, 202
 Combermere, Lord, 239
 Compagnie des Indes Orientales, 199, 202
 Congress, 316, 317, 321-2, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328-9, 330-2, 335, 336, 344
 Conjeevaram, 93
 Constantinople, 189, 220
 Co-operative Societies Act, 335

- Coorg, 240, 285, 294
 Coote, Sir Eyre, 220
 Cornwallis, Lord, 220-3, 225, 228, 237, 257, 276, 280, 281, 282, 283
 Coromandel, 93, 145, 182, 196
 Cranbrooke, Lord, 303
 Cripps, Sir Stafford, 329, 336, 120
 Cromwell, Oliver, 197
 Curzon, Lord, 308-9, 317, 318, 324, 325, 335, 116
 Cutch, 64, 75, 125, 244
 Cyrus the Great, 37, 98
- DACCA, 173, 268, 277, 282, 309, 325
 Dalhousie, Lord, 246, 247, 257, 268, 269, 279, 285-6, 288, 289, 290, 295, 108
 Dandi, 328
 Darius I, 24, 37
 Das, C. R., 327
 Daulat Khan Lodi, 126, 132
 Daulat Rao Sindia, 234, 236, 237, 238
 Daulatabad (Deogir), 112, 140
 Dayananda Saraswati, Swami, 319-20, 335
 Deccan, 20, 89-90, 92, 115, 118, 153, 169, 173, 174, 177, 182, 201, 202, 206, 207, 218, 238, 250, 268
 Delhi, 30, 102, 104, 106, 107, 108, 110, 112, 114, 125, 126, 132, 134, 140, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 172, 181, 182, 188, 190, 191, 202, 222, 229, 236, 239, 240, 247, 248, 250, 251, 264, 279, 283, 286, 290, 294, 295, 332, 35
 Delhi, New, 342, 43
 Deogir (Daulatabad), 107, 112, 115, 139
 Department of Commerce, etc., 317
 Devaraya II, 122
 Dharmapala, 94
 Dharmasastras, 50, 80
 Diodotus, 63
 Dipalpur, 113
 Disraeli, Benjamin, 302, 303
 'Doctrine of lapse', 268, 285ff.
 Dost Muhammad, 244
 Drake, Sir Francis, 195
 Dufferin, Lord, 321, 322, 335
- Dum Dum, 250
 Dupleix, Joseph François, 199, 205, 206, 229, 94
 Durga, 13
 'Dyarchy', 314, 315
 Dyer, General, 326
- EAST INDIA COMPANY, 159, 163, 189, 195, 196-8, 200, 202, 210ff., 216ff., 224-5, 227, 234, 237, 240, 249, 254, 266, 273ff., 278ff., 284ff., 300
 Education, scenes of, 76-81
 Edwardes, Herbert, 286, 288
 Elephanta cave, 92
 Elgin, the Lords, 335
 Elizabeth I, Queen, 159
 Ellenborough, Lord, 242, 245, 246, 295, 323
 Ellura, 81, 92, 20, 23
 Elphinstone, Mountstuart, 211, 259, 294
 England: English, 145-6, 182, 195, 196, 199, 205, 206, 207, 212, 217, 225, 227-8, 233ff., 267ff., 306ff., 332, 334, 102
 Ethiopia, 71
 Eucratides of Bactria, 84
 European, Indian picture of a, 56
- FA-HSIEN, 77, 78, 98
 Farghana, 131
 Faria y Sousa, *Portuguese Asia*, 143, 145
 Farrukhabad, 182
 Farrukhsiyar, 181, 198, 202
 Fathpur Sikri, 158, 189, 200
 Ferozepur, 246, 250
 Festivals, Hindu, 45, 48, 52, 53, 57; Muslim, 51
 Firdausi, *Shah Nama*, 102
 Firishta, 144, 153
 Firuz, 113-14, 139, 140
 Firuz Shah Bahmani, 116
 Fitch, Ralph, 159, 187, 195, 200
 Fort St George, 201
 Fort William, 198, 202, 207, 264
 Forward Bloc, 329
 France: French, 179, 182, 205, 207, 210, 212, 217, 220, 233, 237, 242, 305
 Francis Xavier, St, 145

- GAHARWARS, 102
 Gama, Vasco da, 143, 146-51, 200
 Gandamak, treaty of, 303
 Gandhara, 37, 47, 63, 64, 66, 98; statue from, 19
 Gandhi, Mahatma, 315, 316, 317, 326-7, 328, 329, 330, 336, 342, 344, 120, 121, 123; holograph of, 119
 Ganesha, 323, 6, 18
 Gangas, 92
 Ganges, river, 19, 20, 29, 30, 41, 58, 76, 86, 107, 182
 Gautamiputra Sri Satakarni, 89
 Ghats, Western, 20
 Ghazni, 101, 102, 139, 245
 Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluk, 111, 140
 Ghulam Khan, miniature by, 109
 Ghur, 102
 Gleig, 257, 259, 260
 Goa, 116, 144, 145, 158, 159, 200
 Gobind Singh, Guru, 191, 202
 Godavari, river, 20, 89
 Goddard, Colonel, 217
 Goethe, 266
 Gogra, river, 19
 Gokhale, G. K., 325
 Golconda, 119, 152, 153, 169, 174, 177, 182, 196, 202
 Gomata, 92
 Gondopharnes, 64
 Gopala, 94, 98
 Government of India Act, 1919 (Montagu-Chelmsford), 314, 315, 326, 327, 336; 1935, 316, 328, 336
 Grant, Charles, 290, 291
Granth Sabib (Adi Granth), 191, 50
 Gujarat, 64, 66, 75, 76, 95, 104, 111, 113, 125, 133, 145, 152, 188, 200, 217; battle of, 246
 Gulab Singh, 246
 Gulbarga, 115, 140
 Guler, painting from, 6
 Gumti, river, 19
 Guptas, 69, 74-6, 78-81, 83, 90, 96, 128
 Gurjaras, 90
 Gurkhas, 238
 Gwalior, 104, 134, 136, 152, 217, 245, 250, 252, 253; battle of, 253
 HAFIZ, 116
 Haidar Ali, 182, 212, 218, 220, 229, 274
 Haileybury, 280
 Halebid, statue from temple at, 18
 Hamilton, William, 198
 Hanuman, 17
 Harappa, 21-3
 Hardinge, Sir Henry, 246, 295
 Hardinge, Lord (formerly Sir Henry), 335
 Hardwar, 20
 Harsha, 76, 77, 81, 84, 85-8, 98; signature of, 86
 Hastings, Lord, 238, 257, 278, 284, 289
 Hastings, Warren, 209, 213-17, 220-1, 228, 229, 266, 275, 96
 Havelock, General, 251
 Hawkins, William, 163, 164, 201
 Hemu (Raja Vikramaditya), 152, 154, 155, 156
 Hermacus, 66
 Herodotus, 37
 Himalayas, 19, 20, 153
 Hindu Kush, 153
 Hindu Widows Remarriage Act, 1856, 268-9, 295
 Hindustan, 95, 131, 132-3
 Hisar Firozah, 113
 Holland: Dutch, 145, 146, 179, 195, 196, 199, 208, 210, 220, 238
 Holwell, 208
 Home, Robert, portraits by, 98, 99
 Hoysalas, 105, 114, 116
 Hsüan-tsang, 67, 81-8, 90, 93, 95, 98
 Hugli, 169, 196, 201
 Humayun, 133-5, 140, 155, 184, 200
 Hume, A. O., 321
 Huns, White, 75-6, 95
 Hunter, Sir W. W., 310, 311, 312
 Husain Ali, 181
 Huvishka, 68
 Hwui Li, 85
 Hyderabad, 182, 234, 237, 284, 285, 341; painting from, 22
 IBN BATUTA, 111
 Ibrahim Adil Shah II of Bijapur, 153; tomb of, 39
 Ibrahim Lodi, 126, 131, 132, 133, 140

- Ilbert, Sir Courtenay, 293
 Ilbert Bill, 321, 335
 Itutmish, 106-7, 139
 India Act, 1784, 221, 229, 249, 276, 279
 India Independence Act, 332
 India League, 328
 Indian Association of Calcutta, 321, 335
 Indian Councils Act, 1861, 335; 1892, 322, 335; 1909 (Morley-Minto), 312, 326, 335
 Indian Mutiny, 246, 247-53, 269, 281, 286, 289, 290, 295, 299, 301, 302, 305, 306, 319, 323
 Indian National Army, 329, 330
 Indian National Conference, 321, 335
 Indian National Congress, *see* Congress
 Indian Penal Code, 282, 295
 Indore, 236, 238, 251
 Indra, 25, 28, 31, 37, 86, 2
 Indus, river and valley, 19, 29, 37, 38, 39, 72, 95, 98, 101, 106, 126, 240
 Irwin, Lord, 328, 336, 118
 Ishvarchandra Vidyasagar, 269
 Islam Shah, 134
 Ismaili sect, 106

 JAHANDAR SHAH, 181, 202
 Jahangir, 153, 157, 159, 163-8, 185, 186, 189, 190, 195, 200, 201, 92
 Jai Singh, observatory of, 44
 Jaichand Gaharwar, 104
 Jains, 27, 92, 93, 94, 158
 Jaipal, 101, 139
 Jaipur, 37, 44
 Jaitpur, 289
 Jalalabad, 245, 303
 Jalal-ud-din, 107, 139
 James I of England, 166, 195
 Jammu, 341
 Jang Bahadur, 252
 Japan, 189, 325, 329, 335
 Jarric, Fr. Pierre du, 159-60, 166
 Jaswant Rao Holkar, 222, 236, 237, 238
 Jaswant Singh, 202
 Jatavarman Sundara, 93
 Jaunpur, 125, 126
 Java, 238, 294
 Jesuits, 158, 159, 163, 200

 Jhansi, 247, 248, 250, 251, 252, 253, 268, 289, 295
 Jhelum, river, 19
 Jinji, 177
 Jinnah, M.A., 328, 329, 330, 121
 Jodhpur, 104
 Jones, Sir William, 266, 294, 97
 Julien, S., *Voyages*, 85
 Jumna, river, 19, 20, 29, 30, 74, 76, 126, 170, 182, 217, 237
 Junagarh, 69, 98
 Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, 106

 KABIR, 129, 190
 Kabul, 126, 131, 140, 143, 152, 153, 154, 156, 157, 166, 173, 181, 184, 200, 241, 242, 244, 303, 304
 Kadphises I, Kushan, 66, 98
 Kafur, 111, 115, 139
 Kaikubal, 107, 139
 Kailasa temple, 92
 Kakatiyas, 105, 114
 Kali, 146, 254, 15
 Kalidasa, 80, 266
 Kalinga, 46, 47, 50, 62, 63, 89, 94
 Kalinjar, 184
 Kamarupa, 85
 Kanara, 234
 Kanauj, 76, 84-5, 86, 94, 95, 98, 102, 104, 112, 139
 Kanchi (Conjeevaram), 92, 93
 Kandahar, 19, 133, 169, 181, 201, 303
 Kanishka Kushan, 66, 67, 68, 98, 88
 Kanpur, *see* Cawnpore
 Kansu, 66
 Kapila, 33
 Kapilavastu, 34
 Karachi, 251, 332
 Kashgar, 66
 Kashmir, 94, 152, 153, 200, 240, 246, 277, 341, 342
 Kasi (Benares), 20, 62
 Kathiawar, 64, 69, 75, 76, 102, 125
 Kausambi, 62, 74
 Kautilya, *Arthashastra*, 42, 43-4, 45, 50
 Kaveri, river, 20
 Kaye, J. W., 239, 240, 259
 Keigwin, Richard, 197-8

- Keralas, 63, 93, 94, 116
 Keshab Chandra Sen, 319
 Khafi Khan, 176, 181, 186
 Khajuraho, 104, 31
 Khan Jahan, 113
 Khandesh, 152, 153, 200
 Khanua, battle of, 133, 135, 137-8, 140
 Kharavela, 62-3, 98
 Khatmandu, 238
 Khiva, 241, 242, 245
 Khizr Khan, Timur's viceroy, 126, 140
 Khotan, 66
 Khusru II, 90
 Khusru, Prince, 163, 166-8, 200, 201
 Khyber Pass, 19
 Kipling, Rudyard, 308
 Kirkee, battle of, 238
 Kleitarchos, 58
 Koer Singh, 252
 Konkan, 75, 179
 Kora, 215
 Kosala (Oudh), 32, 42, 62
 Kosambi, *Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, 84
 Kosmas Indikopleustes, *Christian Topography*, 71-2
 Krishna, god, 30, 31, 53, 80, 146, 16
 Krishna I, king, 92
 Krishna, river, 20, 68, 74, 89, 115, 206
 Krishnadevaraya, 118-19, 120, 122, 140
 Kulottunga I Chola, 139
 Kumaon, banner from, 15
 Kumara Raja, 85, 86, 87
 Kumaragupta, 75
 Kurukshetra, 20, 106
 Kushans, 66-8, 69
 Kutub-ud-din Aibak, 104, 106, 139

 LADAKH, 240
 Lahore, 102, 126, 132, 134, 156, 167, 169, 181, 246, 251, 286, 294, 328
 Lajpat Rai, 325
 Lake, Lord, 236, 294
 Laknauti, 134
 Lakshmana Sena, 104
 Land Alienation Act, 335
 Lansdowne, Lord, 335
 Law, Thomas, 275
 Lawrence, Sir Henry, 246, 250, 288, 109
 Lawrence, Sir John (later Lord), 286, 301-2, 335, 113
 Lawrence, Stringer, 280
 League of Nations, 314, 336
 Leedes, William, 159, 195
 Lester, W., 291
 Lhasa, 304, 335
 Lichchavi clan, 74
 Linga, 9, 10
 Lingyats, 27
 Linlithgow, Lord, 336
 Lucknow, 248, 250, 251, 252, 326, 336, 40, 42, 80; drawings from, 46, 47, 58, 71, 75
 Ludhiana, 241, 244
 Lytton, Lord, 303, 304, 311, 335

 MACAULAY, LORD, 255, 256, 257, 260-5, 280, 286, 295, 306, 105
 Macnaghten, William, 244
 Macpherson, Sir John, 221, 283
 Madras, 177, 196, 201, 205, 206, 213, 214, 216, 220, 221, 229, 237, 239, 251, 257, 275, 277, 295; statue from, 7
 Madras Presidency, 278, 279, 283, 294
 Madura, 93, 115
 Madyadesa, 29
 Magadha, 32, 34, 38, 42-5, 50, 62, 63, 64, 74, 98
 Maha Bandula, 239
 Mahabat Khan, 201
 Mahabharata, 29-30, 31, 80
 Maham Anaga, 152
 Mahanadi, district, 63; river, 20
 Maharashtra, 69, 174
 Mahavira, Vardhamana, 32, 33-4, 98, 21
 Mahendrapala I, 95, 98
 Mahmud, of Ghazni, 101, 102, 139, 245
 Mahmud II, of Malwa, 126
 Mahmud Bigarha, 125, 140
 Mahmud Gawan, 116, 140
 Mahomed Rheza Khan, 213, 214
 Malabar, 71, 93, 143, 146, 234, 327
 Malacca, 144, 159, 196
 Malavas, 76
 Malcolm, Sir John, 257, 259, 260
 Malwa, 62, 63, 64, 76, 92, 104, 111, 125, 133, 134, 152, 200

- Mamallapuram, 93
 Man Singh, 184, 253
 Mandu, painting from, 10
 Mangalore (Mangarouth), 71, 72
 Mankot, 157
 Manucci, Niccolas, 174
 Marathas, 169, 174, 177, 181, 182, 187,
 197, 212, 213, 215, 217-18, 220, 222,
 229, 234, 236, 238, 245, 259, 284, 289,
 294, 322, 323
 Marriage, a Muslim, 46
 Martin, François, 202
 Marwar, 173, 174, 202
 Masulipatam, 196, 201, 206; treaty of, 212
 Mathura, 62, 64, 67-8, 81, 102; statues
 from, 8
 Maues, 64
 Mauritius, 205, 220, 234, 237
 Maurya Empire, 39-40, 42-5, 46, 48, 78, 80
 Mayo, Lord, 302, 335
 Meerut, 247, 250, 270
 Megasthenes, *Indika*, 40, 43, 54, 56, 60, 98
 Mehta, Sir Phirozeshah, 322
 Menander, 63, 64, 98, 85
 Metcalfe, Sir Charles, 240, 242, 286
 Methwold, William, 196
 Mewar, 133, 138, 166, 173, 174, 184, 201
 Mihira Bhoja I, 95, 98
 Mihiragula, 75, 76, 98
 Mill, James, 286, 293, 294, 306
 Mindon, 305
 Ming Hien, 87
 Minto, Lord, 237, 238, 239
 Minto, Lord, II, 312, 326, 335
 Mir Jafar, 207, 208
 Mir Jumla, 173, 201
 Mir Kasim, 208, 209, 225
 Mir Muhammad Nasir Jang, 206
 Mira Bai, 130
 Mithila, 76
 Mithridates the Great, 64
 Mitra, R. C., 322
 Mohenjo-daro, 21-3
 Moluccas, 195
 Mongols, 107, 113, 114, 139, 140
 Monserrate, Fr., 160
 Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, 314, 326,
 327, 336
 Moorecroft, William, MS for, 62-4
 Moplahs, 327, 336
 Morley, Lord, 325
 Morley-Minto Reforms, 312, 326, 335
 Mountbatten, Lord, 331, 332, 336, 340
 Mountbatten, Lady, 123
 Muhammad Adil Shah, 134
 Muhammad Ali, Nizam, 206, 212, 218,
 220, 227, 234
 Muhammad II Bahmani, 116
 Muhammad Hakim, 153, 200
 Muhammad ibn Bhaktyar, 104, 139
 Muhammad of Ghur, 102, 104, 106, 139
 Muhammad Shah, 181, 202
 Muhammad Shah III Bahmani, 116, 118
 Muhammad, son of Balban, 107
 Muhammad Tughluk, 111-13, 140
 Multan, 107, 113, 134, 152, 246
 Mumtaz Mahal, 169, 201
 Munro, Sir Hector, 218
 Munro, Sir Thomas, 257, 259, 260, 294
 Murad, Prince, 160
 Murshidabad, 277, 282; painting from,
 67, 100
 Muslim League, 316, 325, 326, 327, 329,
 330-2, 335, 336
 Muzaffar Jang, 206
 Mysore, 92, 105, 182, 206, 212, 229, 233,
 234, 240, 274, 285, 294, 81

 NADIR SHAH, 181, 189, 202
 Nagpur, 238, 247, 250, 268, 289, 295
 Nalanda, 83, 86, 87, 88, 104
 Nana Fadnavis, 218
 Nana Sahib, 247, 248, 251, 269, 290
 Nanak, Guru, 130, 140, 191, 200
 Nanda, 42, 98
 Nanda Dynasty, 38, 42
 Nandakumar (Nuncomar), 213-14, 216
 Narasimha Saluva, 118
 Narasimhavarman, 92
 Narbada district, 251, 283; river, 20, 69,
 74, 76, 113, 153, 173, 174
 Nasik, 64, 89, 90
 Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, 107, 139
 Nearchos, 57
 Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal, 328, 331, 342,
 344, 122, 124

- Nehru, Pandit Motilal, 327
 Nepal, 238, 252, 253, 294
 New English Company, 197, 198, 202
 Newbery, John, 159, 195
 Nicholson, General John, 251, 286, 288
 Nikitin, Athanasius, 118
 Nilgiri mountains, 20
 Nizam-ud-din Ahmad, 153
 Northbrook, Lord, 302-3, 335
 North-west Frontier, 300
 North-west Frontier Province, 314, 330, 331, 332, 335
 North-west Provinces, 275
 Nowshera, 155
 Nuddea, 104
 Nuniz, Fernão, 118, 121
 Nur Jahan, 166, 168, 169, 186, 201

 OMICHAND, 207
 Orenburg, 241, 242, 245
 Orissa, 46, 76, 89, 140, 152, 196, 200, 210, 229
 Ormuz, 144, 196
 Oudh, 42, 182, 221, 234, 247, 248, 252, 253, 275, 283, 284, 289-90, 294, 295
 Outram, Sir James, 251
 Oxinden, Henry, 177, 197

 PAES, DOMINGO, 120, 121
 Pakistan, 329, 330, 332, 334, 336, 341, 342, 344
 Palas, 94, 98
 Palghat, 20
 Pallavas, 69, 93
 Palmerston, Lord, 240-1
 Panchala, 62
 Pandyas, 63, 70, 93, 94, 115, 116
 Panikkar, K. M., *Survey of Indian History*, 75
 Panini, 52
 Panipat, battle of, 126, 132, 135, 140; second battle of, 152, 156, 200; third battle of, 181, 212
 Paris, treaty of, 212, 229
 Parsees, 158, 227
 Parvati, 53, 6, 14
 Paskiewitch, General, 242
 Patanjali, 33
 Pathans, 300
 Patiala, 101
 Patilaputra (Patna), 42, 43, 48, 51, 53, 54, 62, 63, 64, 74, 98, 133
 Patna, 42, 133, 282
 Pattadakal, sculpture from, 87
 Pawas, 104
 Pegu, 247, 295
 Pelsaert, Francisco, 187
 Penna, river, 20
 Permanent Settlement, 276, 277
 Peroffski, General, 242, 245
 Persia, 37, 68, 71, 72, 102, 111, 134, 169, 174, 190, 237, 242, 244, 302
 Persian Gulf, 92, 144, 196, 242
 Peshawar, 19, 66, 67, 107, 241, 244, 248
 Pigot, Lord, 227
 Pindaris, 238
 Pitt, William, 221, 229, 249, 276, 279
 Plassey, battle of, 208, 224, 229
 Plato, 37, 56
 Pliny, 40, 70
 Plutarch, *Lives*, 39
 Polilor, battle of, 220
 Polo, Marco, 93, 139
 Pondicherry, 199, 202, 205, 206, 229
 Poona, 182, 217, 229, 236, 237, 238, 278
 Popham, Sir H. R., 217
 Porto Novo, battle of, 220
 Portugal: Portuguese, 143-6, 153, 169, 195, 196
 Porus, 38
 Prabhakara Vardhana, 76
 Pradyota, 32
 Prasad, Dr Rajendra, 127
 Prasenajit, 32
 Pratiharas, 94-5
 Prayag (Allahabad), 20, 85
 Print-seller, a, 22
 Prithiviraj Chauhan, 102, 106, 139
 Pulakesin II, 76, 90, 92, 98
 Pulicat, 201
 Punjab, 19, 21, 25, 37, 39, 42, 63, 64, 66, 68, 74, 75, 76, 94, 95, 101, 102, 134, 152, 154, 181, 237, 244, 246, 247-8, 274, 277, 283, 286, 288, 295, 300, 314, 330, 331, 332; paintings from, 110, 111
 Punjab Land Allocation Act, 318

- Puranas*, 80
Purusha, 27
Pushyamitra, 62, 98
 QUESTIONS OF MILINDA, 63
Quetta, 303, 335
 RAICHUR, 118
Raja Bhoja, 104, 139
Rajaraja the Great, 94, 98
Rajaram, 177
Rajendra IV Chola, 139
Rajputana, 19, 74, 94, 104, 107, 133, 134, 135, 140, 152, 173, 182, 236, 237, 250, 253
Rajputs, 90, 95, 102, 104, 106, 125, 133, 173-4, 177, 181, 190, 222, 285
Rajya, 76
Rajyastri, 76
Ram Mohun Roy, 266-7, 294, 319, 106
Ramakrishna Paramahansa, 320, 335
Ramananda, 129
Ramanuja, 96, 129
Ramayana, 29, 30, 31, 190
Ramraja, 119
Rana Sangram Singh, 133
Rangoon, 239, 246, 295, 329
Ranjit Singh, 237, 240, 244, 246, 274, 294, 295, 110
Rao Sahib, 251
Rapti, battle of, 253
Rashtrakutas, 92, 94, 95, 98, 104
Rathors, 104, 173
Ravi, river, 19
Rawalpindi, 251
Rawlinson, H. G., 80
Rawlinson, Sir Henry, 302
Raziyya, 107, 139
Reading, Lord, 336
Red Sea Telegraph, 305, 335
Regulating Act, 1773, 279
Reynolds, Joshua, portraits by, 96, 97
Rhagunath Rao, 217
Rig-Veda, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29
Ripon, Lord, 304, 335, 115
Roberts, General, 304
Roe, Sir Thomas, 166, 195, 201
Rohilkand, 182, 215, 252
Rome, 66, 70
Rose, Sir Hugh, 252, 253
Round Table Conference, 315, 328, 336
Rudra, 28
Rudradaman, kings of this name, 64; I, 69, 98
Russia, 240, 241, 242, 244, 245, 300, 302, 303, 325, 335
 SABBAS, 39
Sabuktigin, 101, 139
Sagala (Sialkot), 63
Sakas (Scythians), 64, 66, 69, 75, 89
Salabat Jang of Hyderabad, 212
Salbai, treaty of, 218
Salimulla, Nawab, 325
Salisbury, Lord, 311
Salsette, island of, 217
Saluva Dynasty, 140
Samana, 113
Samarkand, 130, 140, 143
Sama-Veda, 24
Sambalpur, 289
Sambhuji, 177, 178, 180, 181, 202
Samudragupta, 74-5, 98
Sanchi, stupa at, 53, 67, 27, 28, 54
Sanders, Commissioner, 248
Sandwip, 173
Sangama Dynasty, 140
Sankara, 96
Sankya school, 33
Sanskrit, 130; in Mauryan times, 52; under Guptas, 80-1; under Moslems, 128; Macaulay's views on, 261, 262, 263, 264
Sarnath, Lion pillar at, 82
Satara, 247, 268, 289, 295
Saugor, 251, 252, 283
Sayyid Dynasty, 126
Schlegel, 266, 344
Schopenhauer, 266
Scylax of Caryandra, 37
Seleucus I, 38-9, 43, 54, 98
Senas, 104
Sepoy Revolt, see Indian Mutiny
Sepoys, 100, 101
Seringapatam, 220, 234, 294
Shah Alam, Emperor, 182, 209, 215, 222, 229, 236

- Shah Jahan (formerly Prince Khurram),
153, 166, 168-71, 190, 192, 194, 196,
201, 202, 91
- Shahjahanabad, 190
- Shahji Bhonsle, 169, 174
- Shahriyar, 168, 169
- Shahu, 181
- Shaista Khan, 173, 201, 202
- Sher Ali, 303
- Sher Khan (Sher Shah), 133-4, 140, 186
- Shihab-ud-din Umar, 139
- Sholinghur, battle of, 220
- Shore, Sir John, 223
- Shuja, Shah, 244
- Sialkot, 63, 64, 251
- Sikander Lodi, 126, 140, 186
- Sikh Wars, 246, 248, 286, 295
- Sikhs, 27, 181, 191, 237, 245, 247, 250,
288, 332, 111
- Simla, 238, 248, 294, 330
- Simon, Sir John, 315
- Simon commission, 315, 327, 336
- Sind, 21, 66, 75, 92, 95, 98, 101, 113, 134,
140, 152, 153, 181, 200, 237, 240, 283,
285, 295, 330
- Sindhia, 217, 221, 229, 234
- Singapore, 329
- Sipri (Sivpur), battle of, 217
- Siraj-ud-daulah, 207, 229
- Sirkap, 64
- Siva, 22, 23, 31, 53, 80, 92, 93, 6, 7, 8
- Sivaji, 169, 173, 174, 176, 177-80, 182,
197, 201, 202, 247, 323
- Skandagupta, 75
- Sleeman, Sir William, 107
- Somnath, temple of, 102, 139, 245
- Somnathpur, statue on temple at, 4
- Son, river, 19, 43
- Spear, T. G. P., 227
- Spice Islands, 195, 196
- Srinagar, 341
- Stephen, Sir J. Fitzjames, 306-8, 309, 310,
311, 312
- Stephen, Leslie, 309
- Stolietoff, General, 303
- Strabo, *Geography*, 43, 54
- Strachey, Sir John, 308, 310
- Suffren, Admiral de, 220
- Sufism, 129
- Sultanganj, 81
- Sumatra, 195
- Sumer, 24
- Sunargaon, 134
- Sunga dynasty, 62-3, 98
- Surat, 163, 177, 195, 197, 198, 199, 201,
202, 227, 325, 335
- Surendranath Banerjea, 321
- Surya, statue of, 3
- Sutlej, river, 19, 76, 237, 241, 242, 246
- Swadeshi movement, 317
- Swaraj party, 327
- Swat, Buddhist object from, 29
- Sylhet, 332
- TAGORE family, 277
- Tagore, Rabindranath, 277, 336, 117
- Taj Mahal, 169, 170, 190, 36
- Talikota, battle of, 119
- Tamasp, Shah, 134
- Tanjore, 206, 227, 234; painting from, 9
- Tantia Topi, 249, 251, 252, 253
- Taprobane (Ceylon), 71-2
- Tapti, river, 20
- Tara Singh, Master, 125
- Tarain, battle of, 102, 104, 106, 139
- Tata, Jamsetji, 114
- Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste, 191
- Taxila, 38, 46, 47, 51, 53, 56, 62, 64
- Taxiles, 38
- Tegh Bahadur, Guru, 191, 202
- Tenasserim, 239, 283, 294
- Thanesar, 76
- Thibaw, 305
- Thompson, Edward, 260; and Garratt,
198, 300
- Thugs, 254-5
- Tibet, 76, 104
- Tilak, B. G., 322-3, 325
- Timur (Tamerlane), 114, 126, 131, 140,
194, 89
- Tipu Sultan, 212, 220, 221, 229, 233-4,
267, 294; tiger of, 103
- Tolstoy, Count L., letter to, 119
- Tomaras, 102, 104
- Toramana, 75-6
- Trades: traders, 66-75

444

Index

Travancore, 220, 237
 Trevelyan, Sir Charles, 256, 270
 Trevelyan, Sir George, 270
 Trichinopoly, 206, 229
 Trimmu Ghat, battle of, 251
 Trimurti, 31, 5
 Tulsi Das, 190
 Tuluva Dynasty, 140
 Tungabhadra, river, 20, 116
 Turkestan, 102, 130
 Turkey, 326, 327
 Turks, 95, 101 ff., 116, 125, 129
 Twist, van, 188

UDAIPUR, 289; market near, 69
 Ujjain, 32, 46, 47, 51, 62, 64, 69, 75, 89, 238
 United Company etc. (English Company, East India Company), 198, 208, 210
 United East India Company of Netherlands, 200
 United Nations Organization, 341
 United Provinces, 327
 Universities Act, 335
 Upagupta of Mathura 46
Upanishads, 32-3, 52
 Ushas, 28

VAISESIKA SCHOOL, 84
 Vakatakas, 90
 Valmiki, 30
 Vansittart, Henry, 208
 Vardhanas, 76
 Varuna, 28, 31
 Vasudeva I, 68
 Vatapi (Badami), 90, 92
 Vatsyayana, *Kamasutra*, 50, 51, 52
Vedas, 24, 25-6, 28-9, 52, 263, 319
 Vellore, 237, 239, 267, 281, 294; painting from, 102
 Viceroy's house, 43

Victoria, Queen, 249, 299, 335
 Videha, 62
 Vidisa, 62
 Vijayanagar, 105, 115-16, 118-24, 140, 144, 152, 169
 Vikramaditya I, 92
 Vikramaditya II, 87
 Village scenes, 33, 55; *see also* Agricultural scenes; Trades; Education
 Vindhya mountains, 20
 Vishnu, 31, 53, 80, 92, 95, 11, 12
 Vivekananda (formerly Narendranath Dutta), 320

WADE, CLAUDE M., 244
 Wales, Prince of, 327
 Warangal, 115
 Watson, Admiral, 207
 Wavell, Lord, 330, 336
 Wellesley, Marquis of (formerly Lord Mornington), 223, 229, 233, 234, 236-7, 239, 242, 99
 Wellesley, Arthur, 233-4, 98
 Wilberforce, William, 291
 Wilkins, Charles, 266, 294
 Wilks, Mark, 212
 Willingdon, Lord, 336
 Wilson, Major-General, 248
 Windham, General, 251

YADAVAS, 105, 115
Yajura-Veda, 24
 Yakub Khan, 303, 304
 Yama, 28
 Yandabo, treaty of, 239
 Yarkand, 66
 Yasodharman, 76, 98
 Younghusband, Sir Francis, 304
 Yueh-chi, 66

ZAFAR KHAN, 125

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MICHAEL EDWARDES' first contact with India was in 1940 when he arrived there as a very young soldier. Insulated from the real life of the country by the consequences of the war with Japan (he served in China and Burma) it was not until 1947, at the very end of British rule in India, that he began seriously to think of the people and their history. After a stay in Paris studying oriental languages, he returned to the East and helped to establish a publishing house specialising in some of the languages of South Asia. He then began a series of journeys through the newly independent countries of Asia, observing the impact of freedom at first hand, meeting the people and their leaders. When in 1954 he joined a London publishing house he began research into the history of British rule in India. This resulted in the planning of a series of books covering aspects of that period. Two have already been published, *The Necessary Hell* (1958), an examination of the nature of the Raj in the nineteenth century, and *The Orchid House* (1960), a view of the relations of the English East India Company with the Indian kingdom of Oudh. In 1957 he began work on the present book. Increasing activity in writing, editing and translating works on Asia, in reviewing (for the *Manchester Guardian*) and broadcasting, forced him to leave publishing in 1959. He is at present working on an examination of Asia today and tomorrow in *The Problems of Asia*, and collecting material for a major work on the end of the British-Indian Empire.

By the same author

ASIA IN THE EUROPEAN AGE

1498-1955

WHEN Vasco da Gama's tiny ships anchored off the Indian port of Calicut in May 1498, Asia's 'European Age'—the era of the Western empires—began. From that time on, the grip of Europe tightened upon Asia, and such great areas as India, the East Indies, and Indo-China came under Western domination. Later, even the vast bulk of China became a plaything of the imperial powers. One Asian nation, Japan, survived the onslaught of the West, learned its scientific and military secrets, and challenged its power in a major war; a war which, it pretended, was fought to free Asia from the grip of the West. The aftermath of the 1941-5 war in the Pacific *did* bring freedom to colonial Asia, with varying degrees of bloodshed. By 1955, Western hegemony in Asia was at an end. New nations—and new threats to their freedom—had emerged.

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20 MAPS

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